

SPIRITUAL DIRECTIONS Z

FOR THE
UNINSTRUCTED;

NOT LESS PROPER

For the Use of Infirmary PATIENTS,

THAN FOR

The UNINSTRUCTED in all CONDITIONS.

By JAMES STONHOUSE, M.D. K

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My Heart's Desire, and Prayer to GOD is, that they might be saved.
ROM. x. 1.

*The Meek will He guide in Judgment; and the Meek will He teach
his Way.* PSAL. xxv. 9.

THE SIXTEENTH EDITION.



L O N D O N:

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WHEREAS Objections may be made to the *more minute* Explanations annexed to some of these DIRECTIONS, it should always be remembered, that a Traveller enquiring after a Road, to which He is an absolute Stranger, will receive from a skilful Director, such Information, as to another, already acquainted with the Way, would appear tedious and superfluous: Yet the Stranger's Attention to the several Particulars will *only be necessary*, till by Use the Road becomes familiar to Him, and He will then find Himself able to proceed without them.—In like Manner, the Explanations here given of the DIRECTIONS are intended for such, as being utterly unacquainted with the Ways of Religion and Piety, are supposed to be entering on a new Course. Some of them likewise are of a greater Length, that they may be as clear, as possible, to the lowest Capacities: such for Instance are the Instructions concerning Prayer;—especially ejaculatory Prayer, of which they suppose the Reader totally ignorant.—Habit will render many of these no longer necessary: And it is well known how far that alone, will by Degrees, make those Things, not only easy, but natural, in which at first great Difficulty was apprehended.

I would advise my Readers to get these eight DIRECTIONS by Heart, frequently to repeat them, and daily to reflect on what has further been advanced to explain and enforce them.—These may probably seem, as Burdens and Penances to those whose Hearts are averse to Religion; but if a Relish for it be once attained, they will in a manner become natural; so natural, that they will scarcely be able (at least not without much Uneasiness) to omit doing what such Directions injoin, so much Delight will they find in this Observance, and so strongly will their Conscience reproach them on the Neglect: For they will then clearly see, that no more is recommended, than what their Necessities, Duty, and Gra-

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itude require.—My Design is to *habituate* the Mind to Religion; to introduce, urge, and cultivate that Repentance, Faith, and Obedience, which the Gospel of Jesus Christ has declared necessary for Salvation. If therefore we walk according to these DIRECTIONS, we shall live in constant Communion with God; and Communion with Him *here* (and that *alone*) can fit us for eternal Happiness, with Him *hereafter*: For without such Gospel Holiness, *improved*, as we have Time, and Opportunity, we must expect to be for ever banished from his Presence, and overwhelmed with Misery inexpressible.

Northampton,
July 9, 1748.

 *The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge has adopted this little Tract into the Number of those Books which they disperse, as properly calculated for the Revival, and Advancement of true Religion; and it may be had, on the Terms of the Society, by any of their subscribing Members: namely, at Half-Price; the other Half being defrayed out of the Society's Fund.*

The Bookfeller begs Leave farther to add, that the Price of this is less than that of any other Tract the same Size; which is owing to the Largeness of the Impression, which, through the Hope of supplying most of the Infirmaries, he has printed, and to the Author's Generosity in not taking Copy-Money for this or any of the preceding Editions.

N. B. *A little Tract, intitled, FRIENDLY ADVICE to a Patient, written by the same Author, is likewise adopted by the Society, and may be had singly for Three-Pence, or at a Guinea per Hundred. These two little Tracts are generally bound up together, and are then sold for Six-Pence, or two Guineas per Hundred.*

For such as are so charitably disposed as to give them away; or for those, who send them into foreign Parts; or for the Governors of Infirmaries, who purchase them to distribute to the Patients, it will be most adviseable to have them sewed in Pasteboards.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTIONS

FOR THE

UNINSTRUCTED.

CONDESCEND to Men of low Estate, is a Precept our great MASTER has taught us, by *his own* Example, as well as by his *Apostle*, Rom. xii. 16. And I have endeavoured to act on this benevolent Principle, in thus supplying the Poor and Uninstructed with *Spiritual Directions*, for the daily Conduct of a real Christian's Life; and though I have added *Explanations* more familiar, and more minute, than might be necessary for those of a higher Rank, and better Education, yet the Substance of them may, I hope, be useful to many others;—and I persuade myself, no wise Readers will despise what is Matter of *universal* Concern, because it is particularly calculated for the Use of those who may, in many Respects, be inferior to Themselves.

DIRECTION I.

Consider, that Faith, (or Belief*) in Jesus Christ, is that Corner-Stone, on which all your Hopes of Salvation, and Success in your religious Duties must necessarily be founded.

WHEN I am exhorting you to Acts of religious Worship, you must not imagine, that I am inviting you to be a mere Formalist, and to rest on the *Deed*

* By a Belief in Jesus Christ, is meant what the Apostle calls "Believing with the Heart," Rom. ix. 10. that is, such a lively Persuasion of the Power and Grace of Christ, and of our very great Need of his Favour, as engages us to receive Him under all his

Deed done : No !—I invite you to come as a Believer, or a real Christian, without which you should dread to appear in the Presence of GOD, “*for our God is a consuming Fire.*”—“Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life :”—“And there is no other Name given among Men, whereby we must be saved :”—He that believeth in HIM, out of his Belly (as the Scripture hath said) shall flow Rivers of living Water :”—And HE, that believeth not the Son, shall not see Life, but the Wrath of God abideth on him.”

And, as all our Hope of Salvation is dependent on a lively Faith in Christ, so is all our Success in our religious Duties. Examine yourself therefore most strictly, whether you have indeed a true *Faith*, and ask yourself seriously, whether above all Things, you desire *Union*, and *Communion* with CHRIST ; Whether you long to be delivered from the *Power*, as well as from the *Guilt* of Sin ? Whether Faith works by Love, not only to GOD and CHRIST, but to your Fellow-Christians ? Whether you endeavour to make the *Love* of GOD your Principle, his *Word* your Rule, and his *Glory* your End in all your Actions ? Whether you strive to “add to your Faith, Virtue ; and to Virtue, Knowledge ; and to Knowledge, Temperance ; and to Temperance, Patience ; and to Patience, Godliness ; and to Godliness, Brotherly Kindness ; and to Brotherly Kindness, Charity ?” 2 *Pet.* i. 6.—If these Things be in you, and abound, they will be sure Signs of a *lively Faith* :—But, without you have them in *some Measure*, you are not purged from your old Corruptions.

Offices, viz. as our Prophet, Priest, and King, that we may obtain the Salvation which He has *promised*, and in the Way which He has appointed in his Gospel.—And remember it is in this Sense, *Belief* (or *Faith*) is to be understood, when the whole Streß of our being saved is laid upon it.—Compare the following Texts :—“Sirs, what must I do to be saved ? And they said, BELIEVE in the Lord Jesus Christ,” Acts xvi. 30, 31.—“And this is his Commandment, that we should BELIEVE in the Name of his Son Jesus Christ, and LOVE one another.” John iii. 23.

Not that He, who finds himself at present utterly destitute of divine Grace, has any Reason to despair; for the Ground of Faith is the *free Promise* of God made to such Sinners (not yet believing) that they, *believing in Christ, and forsaking their Sins*, shall be pardoned: Tho' Faith and Repentance are not in themselves *the Cause* of Pardon, (for *the Cause* is the Mercy of God; and the Merits of Christ) they are nevertheless *the Means*, without which it cannot be obtained: Thus Opening our Eyes is no *Cause* of Vision, but it is the *Means*, without which we cannot see. If we *repent* not, our Sins shall not be forgiven; if we *believe* not in Christ, we shall not have everlasting Life: If we do not *abhor*, and *forsake* our past Sins, we cannot be said sincerely to *repent* of them; nor can we justly hope, that they will be forgiven.—Christ freely pardons *all*, who accepts his Invitation, and by *Faith* we pray to Him, that we may not only freely be *pardoned*, but *sanctified* likewise.—He grossly *deceives* Himself, who imagines that God will grant Him a *Pardon*, and a Permission to continue in wilful Sin:—A *Change* to Holiness in his Mind and Affections, and the Consequences of that in his future Conduct, is to Him the *Evidence* of that saving Grace, which has been freely bestowed on him by Christ, to subdue the Corruptions of his depraved Nature.

And here let me, once for all, give you *two* most important *Cautions*, which I must entreat you to remember, not only whenever you *use* this little Treatise, but during the *whole Course* of your Life, in order to prevent your falling into either of those *opposite Extremes*, which alas! too naturally flow “*from a Zeal without Knowledge*;” and are equally dangerous, and subversive of *true Christianity*. The Want of Attention to these *two* Cautions has greatly distracted some, and misled other sincere Christians.

The *first Caution* is, that you never admit a Thought tending to the Opinion, *that Faith in Christ, and the Atone-ment made by Him (on which alone our Hopes of Salvation are fixed) may be ever so understood, as if you were thereby freed from the Necessity of Obedience to all God's Commands.*

The

The second is, *that you always retain an equal Abhorrence of the false Supposition, that Obedience, on your Part, can in any Degree be meritorious.*

As to the *first*, I must observe, that such a Supposition would indeed totally destroy the very *Fundamentals* of Religion; make practical Godliness of no Signification, and open a Door to all Manner of Licentiousness. — Let us not *deceive* ourselves: “God hath redeemed us by the Death of Christ, that we might be a peculiar People to Himself, zealous of good Works.” He has lent us Talents*, and will call us to an Account for the *Use* and *Improvement* of them. — Real, and vital *Holiness* is inseparably connected with a living *Faith*. It is an *essential*, and very *distinguished* Part of the Salvation procured by Jesus Christ, who died not only to purchase our Pardon by his Blood; but He ascended likewise on High, that He might lead Captivity Captive, give Gifts to Men, and send his Holy Spirit to restore our fallen Nature to that Image, and Resemblance of the Divine Nature, in which the Happiness of the Angels in Heaven consists, and by which Resemblance *alone*, we can be prepared to enjoy it with them.

I shall endeavour to illustrate this very important Truth by the following *Comparison*, which I have placed in *opposite* Columns, that it may *more clearly* be apprehended by common Readers.

Suppose some wretched Malefactor condemned for his Crimes, to suffer an ignominious Death.

Of what Importance would a *Pardon* be to such a one, if, at the same Time, he was languishing in the last State of a Consumption, or under a Complication of Diseases, for which he knew *no Cure*?

Suppose likewise some miserable Sinner condemned for his Transgression, to suffer eternal Torments:

Of what Importance would a *Pardon* be to such a one, if he was still under the Power of his deadly Lusts, the deplorable Sickness of the Mind, for which he knew *no Cure*? — And which Lusts, as they pre-

* See Matth. xxv. 15.

—And which Diseases, as they prevent his Body from receiving its *natural* Nourishment, must inevitably and speedily bring Him to the Grave.

But could He obtain a *Pardon* thro' a Physician, who, at the same Time, would bring, as a sure *Remedy*, some sovereign Medicine to operate powerfully on Him, till his drooping Nature was revived, and the Cure performed;

Then a *Pardon* would indeed avail, and He would have *true Reason* to rejoice for so complete a Deliverance; because, by efficacious Medicines, He would be restored to *that Health of Body*, which would enable him to enjoy the Society of his Fellow-Creatures.

vent his Soul from receiving its *spiritual* Nourishment, must inevitably and speedily bring Him to Destruction.

But could He obtain a *Pardon* thro' Christ, who, at the same Time, would bring, as a *Remedy*, the Holy Spirit, to operate continually on Him, till the New Man was formed in Him, and He had attained an utter Abhorrence of Sin, and a Delight to do the Will of God;

Then a *Pardon* would indeed avail, and He would have *true Reason* to rejoice for so complete a Deliverance; because, by the constant Operations of the Holy Spirit, He would be restored to *vital Holiness, that Health of Soul*, which would enable him to enjoy the Society of the Blessed.

Happy it is for us (and oh that we were but sufficiently *sensible* of the inestimable Blessing) that *polluted* as we are, we have a Physician in our Judge, able to *pardon* our Sins, and to *heal* our distempered Souls.—Let every responding Sinner then * attend for his Consolation, to our Saviour's Call, “† Come unto me all ye, that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you Rest.” Remember that *He* is the Fountain ‡ opened for Sin and Uncleaness: Thither come therefore, and wash away your Sins, calling on the Name of the Lord.

* Eph. v. 14. † Matt. xi. 28. ‡ Zech. xiii. 1.

“—G.

“—Go boldly to the Throne of Grace, that you may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help you in Time of Need.” My *second* Caution is, that *you always retain an equal Abhorrence of the false Supposition, that Obedience on your Part can be in any Degree meritorious.*

This most absurd, and arrogant Supposition, I should think, could never enter into a Mind endued with human Reason, and conscious of human Infirmities.—It appears so shocking to my Apprehension, that I charitably hope, and I believe that *few, if any*, really hold this Tenet of *Self-sufficiency*, whatever may be supposed. It will be difficult, perhaps, to produce even *one*, who will chuse to *avow* it, without such Qualification or Restriction, as may serve, on Occasion, to explain it away; (which, by the bye, is no uncommon Article in Disputes on such Subjects.)—That *Church*, of which I am a Member, leaves no Room in her public Offices, for a Supposition of any such Tenet. Every Prayer in our Liturgy (or Book of Common Prayer) is presented to God in the Name of Jesus Christ, pursuant to the Declaration of Scripture, “*No man cometh to the Father but by me**.—*Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you*†.”—Shall we then presume to take Delight in our own Worth, when we are not judged worthy† so much, as even to *ask Pardon* for our Sins, without the Mediation, and Intercession of the Son of God?—It is here proper to observe, that *two* Things are absolutely necessary to constitute a Work *meritorious*; namely, that it is wholly *our own*: and that He, for whom we perform it, *wants it on his own Ac-*

* See John xiv. 6.

† See John xvi. 23.

‡ See the Collect for the *twelfth* Sunday after Trinity; which may be used at any Time, when you implore God for the Forgiveness of your Sins.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who art always more ready to hear, than I to pray, and art wont to give more than either I desire or deserve; pour down upon me the Abundance of thy Mercy, forgiving me those Things, whereof my Conscience is afraid, and giving me those good Things, which I am not worthy to ask, but through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ, thy Son our Lord. Amen.

ount. As to the *first*, St. Paul assures us, that "we are not of ourselves sufficient to think any Thing as of ourselves," (2 Cor. iii. 5.)—And if *not*, then we are not sufficient of ourselves to begin a good Work: For surely before a good Work can be begun, we must first think of it, and reason on it. What then have we, which we have not received? And if we have received it, the Obligation must doubtless lie on the Receiver, and not on the Giver.—As to the *second*, granting that our Works were pure and perfect, (the very best of which are far from having such a Claim) nay granting, that Angels or Archangels could not perform better, still they would have no *Merit* towards God, because he *wants* no Aid from *us* in any Respect.—Indeed, one *Mortal*, however great and elevated his Station may be, *wants* the Service of another: A Master *wants* the Assistance of a Servant, and a King the Help of his Subjects; but our supreme Master, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, is neither the stronger, the richer, or the happier for any Services *we* can render Him; nor the weaker, the poorer, or the less happy for any *Omission* of such Services. Our *Obedience* therefore is not required for *his* Sake, but for *our own*; because we can obtain Happiness no other Way, than by *obeying* his righteous Laws, and *conforming* to his holy Will, and consequently our good Works though profitable to *ourselves*, are of *no* Advantage to God.

Add likewise, that the most refined Nature derived from *Adam* by natural Generation, was never yet found without Imperfection. The Scripture has pronounced *all* to be under the Dominion of Sin; there is *none* in a State of Nature righteous, no, *not one*.

Briefly—It is in *Christ alone*, that God is well pleased; and with *us* in Him; so that no Man can come unto God but by Him, and every Thing, that we would receive, we must ask in his Name.—A Consideration methinks, which should *comfort* the Weak-hearted, while it humbles the Haughty and Self-sufficient: For let your Prayers be ever so proper in the Form and Expression; or let your *Heart* accompany them with a Devotion ever so

so intense, still they become acceptable to God through *Christ alone*; and are the *Means* indeed to *make you good*; but the *Goodness itself* is not in *them*; no more than *Favour* amongst Men can be said to be *deserved*, because *asked* with Humility, Propriety, and Elegance.—If therefore you was to trust in *them*, as *meritorious* in any Degree, it would be making *Idols* of your *Prayers*; it would be putting *them* in the Place of *Christ's Atonement*; which is quite contrary to praying, as an *unworthy* Sinner, in the Name of *Christ*.

These *two* Cautions being sufficiently explained, and *both* Extremes being of such *dangerous* Consequence, it is hoped that they will be frequently *considered*, and duly *regarded*.

DIRECTION II.

Pray without ceasing; that is to say, be continually in a *Disposition* to pray: Let your Requests be made known unto God in the Name of *Christ*, and praise him for ever the Blessing you have received.

PRAYER may with Propriety be divided into *sudden*, and *solemn*. By the *former* we offer up short and *sudden* Petitions at the Throne of Grace, on every Occasion, in the *Midst* of our worldly Employments. By the *latter* we quit our worldly Employments, that we may in a more enlarged and *solemn* Manner, address our heavenly Father: The *latter* has appropriated the Name of *Prayer* to itself, tho' *both* are equally so, and equally acceptable in the Sight of God, if offered up in the Name of *Christ*, according to his Will.

Sudden Petitions are called *Ejaculations*: The unstructed Reader perhaps will best understand me, if I give some *Instances* of this Kind of Prayer. Thus the *first Office every Morning*, should be *Thankfulness*, which may be expressed in some such *Ejaculation* as this.

Praised be thy Holy Name, O LORD my Redeemer, for preserving me from all the Dangers of the Night past, and

for adding another Day to my Life. Give me, I beseech thee, Grace, that I may employ it to thy Glory, and the Salvation of my immortal Soul.

But besides the *Morning*, there will other Occasions offer for pious *Ejaculations* all the Day long; and I would earnestly recommend them as the *best Means* of guarding against the first Assaults of Temptation, and of keeping up *constant Communion* with God. Thus on some remarkable Deliverance, you may say—"Blessed be thy holy Name, O Lord, for this Mercy."—On some good Work performed—"Thanks be to God who has enabled me to perform this Work; I am nevertheless an unprofitable Servant."—On some sudden Appearance of Danger—"Good Lord deliver me from this Danger." Or, "Take me, O God, under thy Protection."—On some sudden Temptation from Satan, the World, or the Flesh—"Guard me against this Temptation."—On some Fall into Sin through Infirmary—"Pardon, I beseech Thee, this my Sin."—On some Sight of your own Corruption—"Give me a new Heart, and renew a right Spirit within me."—On hearing of the Death of Friends—"Teach me so to number my Days, that I may apply my Heart unto Wisdom"—and such like.

Every Sentence of the LORD's Prayer likewise may be considered and used, as a distinct *Ejaculation*; as may every Petition, or Thanksgiving, in the Bible; (or in any Prayer) if it suits your Case: Endeavour therefore to become "a Scribe well instructed to the Kingdom of Heaven*:" Study the Word of God, and you will never want † *Expressions* to carry on this heavenly Correspondence.

* Matt. xiii. 52.

† Nature directs every Man, (even the most profligate) to utter sudden *Ejaculations*, in Cases of Surprise, or imminent Danger, where there can be no Time for Premeditation, (such as "Lord have Mercy upon me," &c.) The natural Language too of the illiterate, will readily express their own sincere and devout Sentiments, on any Emergency; and not the less acceptable to God, for what we weak Mortals should esteem an Impropriety, or Defect.

Solemn Prayer may well be divided into two Parts, *occasional* and *stated*. *Occasional*, as in Times of Affliction, or Sickness; the Mind of Man being then, like a weak Plant, under Pressure, and God its only Support; and every important Occasion in Life will furnish Matter for Prayers suitable to it.—*Stated*, or fixed to certain Times and proper Opportunities, as Morning and Evening Prayers.

At *Morning Prayer* offer up the *following* (or some other to the like Purpose) before you are engaged in any *worldly Business*. An Awe of GOD on your Hearts will direct you to use the *most humble and devout Postures*, and Gestures, when you are addressing Him. *Kneeling* is undoubtedly the most decent, reverential, and becoming Posture: Yet when by Sickness, Weakness, or other *unavoidable Hindrances* you cannot kneel, pray, as you sit, stand, ride, walk, or lie in Bed; remembering, that God at *all Times* (especially at such Times) regards not so much the *Posture* of the *Body*, as the Disposition of the *Heart*: And that (as the Psalmist expresses it) “if any regard Iniquity in their Hearts, the Lord will not *hear their Prayers*.” (Psal. lxvi. 18.) But in Circumstances, where *Kneeling* can be complied with, it would be downright *Laziness*, and great *Irreverence* not to Kneel.

Let me prevail on *all my Readers* to rise *early*; for the *Pillow* is a treacherous Counsellor, and *Time* is too precious to be lost in an *unnecessary Indulgence*; which may, in *many Circumstances*, be *more sinful*, than the Generality of us are aware: For if they cannot comply with *so small* an Instance of Self-denial, how can they be expected to comply with *others*, which may be *more difficult*? Only consider how greatly the Gain of an Hour or two, every Day from Sloth and Insensibility, really adds to the Term of your Life, as well as conduces to the Preservation of your Health — For in Effect, *He* can scarcely be said to live, who has no Sense of his Being, nor Use of his Faculties; and the Habit of *more or less Indulgence*, is known to make an *astorishing Difference*

Difference in these last, when we are awake and capable of using them.

A Prayer* for the Morning.

N. B. *The Reader will observe that the Words, me, myself, my, &c. are printed in a different Letter thro' the whole of the Prayers for Morning, and Evening.—When therefore they are used for Family Prayers, read we instead of I, our for my, us for me, with such other Alterations, as Circumstances may require.—But I would by no Means have these Prayers improperly repeated by using them on the same Day, first in secret Devotion, and afterwards in public with the Family—nor yet imagine, that the Performance of one of these Duties will be sufficient without the other, where both are practicable.*

Thanksgiving. **A** *Lmighty and most merciful God, with my whole Heart I thank thee for my Preservation during the past Night, and for adding another Day to my Life, while so many are cut off unprepared, and unwarned.*

* *Observe, that for the Benefit of such as are very weak, or have frequent Returnings of violent Pain, which may render them incapable of using, with due attention and Devotion any large Forms of Prayer, Care has been taken that these here given, should not be long, or diffusive, and yet regular in the Division. Servants and Day-Labourers, would do well to consider how small a Portion of Time will be required for their early rising, in Order to perform the necessary Duty of Prayer before they enter upon that, which belongs to their several Stations. Such as cannot read, (especially Patients in an Infirmary) might, by some charitable Friend, be taught to repeat them by Heart; which may to the Teachers, as well as the Learners, be a very profitable Exercise, during their Confinement, if their Illness be not extreme.*

Those who have very weak Memories, and many Children of five or six Years old, may be taught to get these short Forms of Prayer by Heart.—But if even these should be thought too long, (which I hope will seldom be the Case) I would then recommend the Use of the LORD's PRAYER, only, with the important Words of St. Paul, namely, May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.

*Confession
and Petition
for Pardon.*

It is of thy Mercies, O Lord, that *I* also am not consumed: For *mine* Iniquities have been more, than the Hairs of *my* Head; and shouldest Thou enter into Judgment with *me*, Thou wouldest be righteous, and *I* must be condemned, and miserable. But do thou, O Lord, be merciful to *me* a Sinner, through thy Son Jesus Christ, the great Propitiation, and let not "*my* Sins" withhold good Things from *me*." (Jer. v. 25.)

*Self-Dedica-
tion to GOD.*

To thee, O Lord, and to thy Service, *I* here dedicate *myself*, both Soul and Body, to promote thy Glory, and *my* own Salvation. *I* resolve, and will by the Grace of God, so improve the *Time*, which thou shalt be pleased to grant *me*, that *I* may every Day *increase* in Holiness, and *persevere* in it to the End of my Life.

*Petition for
Assistance.*

Strengthen *me*, *I* beseech Thee, by the Assistance of thy Holy Spirit, without which, *I* am *unable* to pursue these sincere Purposes: And secure *me* by thy Grace against the Snares, and Temptations, to which *I* am *daily* exposed.

*Petition in Be-
half of others.*

Send thy Glorious Gospel to the whole human Race, and give them the Love and Fear of Thee: Bless *my* Relations and Friends: Bless likewise all those who remember *me* in their Prayers; and those who have desired my Prayers for them.—Pardon *my* Enemies, and turn their Hearts; and grant to *all* whatsoever is needful, or profitable, either for the Welfare of their *Bodies*, or the Salvation of their *Souls*.

*Petition for
God's Blessing.*

Enable *me*, Lord of all Power and Goodness, faithfully to perform the several Duties belonging to *my* Station in this Life.—Prosper thou the Work of *my* Hands, and bless *my* honest Endeavours. Guard *my* Health, and Safety; and whatever *I* do, may *I* do it "*heartily, as to the Lord;*" that *I* may be an *useful* Member of Society, and a faithful Servant of Christ.—May *I* live all the Day long in thy Fear, under a Sense of thy Presence, in an humble Trust in thy fatherly Protection and

and in a lively Hope of everlasting Glory, through Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

On Sunday Morning, let what follows between the Hooks [thus] be added, but at no other Time.

[I thank thee, O Lord, for setting apart a Day for the noble Employment of joining with my Fellow-Christians in the public Worship and Service of our great Creator and Redeemer.—Teach *me* to remember this thy Command; and to shew *my* Obedience in devoutly attending on thy Worship, and fervently joining in the several Parts of it. Let thy Words delivered, and explained by the Mouth of thy Ministers, find a ready Admission into *my* Heart, and not be lost through Carelessness, or rendered fruitless by the vain Pursuits of the World.]

O Thou, that hearest Prayer, hear these *my* imperfect Petitions humbly presented in thy Son's Name; by whose Gospel *I* have been instructed, enjoined, and encouraged thus to address Thee in Behalf of *myself*, and all *my* Fellow Creatures.

Our FATHER, which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name:—Thy Kingdom come:—Thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven.—Give us this Day our daily Bread:—And forgive us our Trespases, as we forgive them that trespass against us:—And lead us not into Temptation; but deliver us from Evil:—For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

At the Conclusion of your Devotions, it can never be improper to add these important Words of the Apostle, which contain a Summary of all the inestimable Blessings, which you have been imploring; and of all, which constitute the Happiness of a Christian.

2 Cor. xiii. 14.

May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,—and the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost, be with *me*, and with *all*, whom it is *my* Duty, to remember in *my* Prayers this Day [or Night] and for evermore! *Amen.*

When you arise from your Knees, be very thankful that GOD has allowed you, through the Merits and Intercession of his SON, the *Privilege* of Prayer. Reflect seriously on the Temper, in which you presented your Addresses at the Throne of divine Mercy; as whether you prayed with Understanding, sensible of your Sins and Wants; with Fervency, with Hope to succeed, and with Love to your Brethren. Remember likewise that you *live* suitably to your Prayers, and continue heavenly-minded all the Day long.

At *Evening* Prayer be particularly watchful against Drowsiness, and never fix the Hour too late in your Family, as they will then be unavoidably fatigued and sleepy.—Go not therefore to your Knees in such a Disposition, and with Carelessness and Indifference, merely out of Custom, and only to keep up the *Form of Prayer*, frequently gaping and half asleep; but be conscientious in this solemn Duty, with an Eye to the Great God of Heaven and Earth; always remembering, that inattentive lifeless Prayer is an unacceptable Offering, and all Confidence in that is an Abomination to the most High.—Consider too, that one Sentence issuing from the *Heart*, and sincerely accompanied by the Affections, is of more Value than many Pages carelessly read over, or the most complete Forms *inattentively* repeated:—Whether therefore your *Prayers* are long, or short, keep your *Heart* with all Diligence; and be sure they are not short for want of Fervour.—Let every one of you, when you pray, be slow in your Utterance, and earnest in your Affections;—make a Stop at the End of every Petition, that you may ponder upon the inestimable Worth of the Blessing you implore; that it may be the Desire of your *Heart*, as well as the Request of your *Tongue*; and may the God of Goodness enable you, “in every Thing by Prayer” and Supplication with Thanksgiving, to let your “Requests be made known to him. *Phil. iv. 6.*

A Prayer

A Prayer for the Evening.

*** When this is used as a Family Prayer, see the Directions given before that in the Morning.—Namely, using we for I, us for me, &c.*

Thanksgiving. **M**OST gracious God, *I* humbly thank thee for having safely brought *me* to the Conclusion of this Day; and for all thy past, as well as present Mercies; but above all for Jesus Christ thy Son, for his glorious Gospel, and the Hope of a far better Life in thy eternal Kingdom.

Confession. *I* acknowledge, O Lord, that *I* am a sinful Creature; that *I* have made very ungrateful Returns to thine infinite Goodness; and *often* transgressed thy Commandments: For which, and for whatever Sins *I* have this Day committed in Thought, Word, or Deed, *I* desire to be sincerely penitent*.

Petition for Pardon. Father of everlasting Compassion, pardon for thy Son Jesus Christ's Sake, all *my* Sins both of Omission and Commission. "*I* have destroyed *myself*, but in Him is *my* Help †." *I* rely on Him, as *my* Saviour, *I* submit to Him, as *my* LORD; and *I* desire to comply with the reasonable, and gracious Terms proposed in the Gospel.

Petition for Assistance. Grant *me*, O Lord, the Assistance of thy Grace to supply the Weakness of my Endeavours, to reform *my* depraved Will, and to govern all my Affections.—Preserve *me* from the Sin of Unbelief in thy Promises, and let *me* ever remember them, to *my* great and endless Comfort.

Petition in Behalf of others. Be merciful, and gracious to the whole Race of Mankind; particularly those to whom *I* am more immediately related, as likewise to this Family. *I* beg thy Blessing on all those, who pray for *me*; and particularly on the

* Here make a *short Pause* for Recollection, and *secret* Confession of the Sins and Failings of the Day: But a more *particular* Confession may be made in private, either *before* or *after* Prayer, as we have time for a *fuller* Self-Examination. See DIRECTION VI.

† Hos. xiii. 9.

afflicted.

afflicted. Reconcile them, O Lord, to their Sufferings, and all of us to Thyself; and give *them* and *me*, whatsoever thine infinite Wisdom knows to be necessary, both for our spiritual, and temporal Welfare.

For Rest and Protection. I commit *myself* unto thee, O God, this Night, beseeching thee to give *me* Rest, and to keep *me* in Safety: Or, if *my* Soul should be required of *me* before the Morning Light, receive *me* to thy Mercy, through the Merits and Mediation of JESUS CHRIST, in whom thou art always well pleased. *Amen.*

On Sunday Evening let what follows between the Hooks [thus] be added to this Prayer, but at no other Time.

[Most gracious God, I lament, that I love thee no better; and am grieved to think of my Coldness and Inattention, which has too often appeared during my Attendance on the solemn Service of this *thy* Day. Accept of such imperfect Offerings as I have made. Grant that I may meditate on thy Law with Profit and Delight; and that the good Seed sown, may take deep Root in *my* Heart, and bring forth abundant Fruits; that so *my* Conversation may be such, as becometh the Disciple and Follower of *my* blessed Instructor and Master JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*

O Thou, that hearest Prayer, &c. See Page 13.
Our FATHER, &c. See Page 13.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus, &c. See Page 13.

These Prayers I have divided regularly, as such Divisions may be of very great Use, by preserving Order, and preventing Confusion in our Addressies to God, particularly in reminding us of what we want, and for what we ought to ask. It is therefore hoped, that the several Heads or Divisions, will be carefully observed and imprinted in our Memories, with a View to which, I have inserted these Divisions in the Margin on the Sides of the Prayers.—By the Blessing of God on the Use of these Means, we may be enabled *in Time* to pursue the same Order and Method both Morning and Evening, in our *own* Words and Expressions; namely, in Thanksgivings and Petitions formed out of our *own* Hearts.

Hearts. A Circumstance greatly to be desired, as it will bring the Mind to an *Habit* of regular Prayer; but this can only be attained by a diligent Use of our *Talents*; that is to say, by devout and constant Practice.

The Use too of these Divisions, I think may be extended still farther; as by this Method, such as are young, may happily become acquainted with the *Design*, and *Meaning* of what they repeat; so as *more early* in Life to acquire the inestimable Habit of *Praying with the Understanding*, and performing to their Creator, in their *Youth*, a reasonable Service.

* * * *Nothing can be of greater Importance to your Improvement in a religious Life, than turning your Morning Prayers into Questions in the Evening, to see how far you have endeavoured to be what you have prayed to be. As for Instance, after having used the Lord's Prayer in the Morning, ask yourselves these Questions in the Evening, Do I hallow God's holy Name? Do I desire his Kingdom of Grace may come here, and his Kingdom of Glory hereafter? Do I desire his Will may be done in me, and by me, and do I act accordingly? &c. &c.*

There is a *stated* Time of short Address to the Almighty, when we sit down to our common Meals. Our SAVIOUR, while on Earth, glorified GOD, by solemnly looking up to Heaven, and blessing the Loaves and Fishes, before he distributed them to those, who sat down to eat: (see *Mark* vi. 41.) And St. Paul, though in Bonds, in Presence of a numerous Company of Heathens*, would not omit this necessary Duty.—God intended we should use, with Moderation, *all* his good Things; but *asking his Blessing* on them, and *Thanksgiving* for them, is the *Condition*: That the most ignorant therefore may not want *proper* Words for this Purpose, I shall add the following *short* Forms.

Grace before Meals.

Bless, O LORD, these thy good Creatures, to our Use, and by them fit us for thy Service, through JESUS CHRIST.

* See Acts xxvii. 35.

Grac

Grace after Meals.

Accept our *Thanks*, O LORD, for *these*, and all thy other Mercies, and may we shew our Gratitude by our Lives, through JESUS CHRIST. *Amen*.

An Address to God ought, doubtless, to be most serious and solemn; let me entreat you therefore to be *very composed* and *reverential* in the Discharge of this Duty; since to perform it in a *slight*, and *negligent* Manner, must be *shocking* to all good Men, and *sinful* before God;—more sinful, perhaps, than even the Omission itself: And if *He*, who asks the *Blessing* of, or returns the *Thanks* to the Almighty, in the Name of the Rest, should *presume* to do it in an *irreverent* Manner; every one present will, I hope, remember, that He is as much obliged to repeat the Grace in his own Mind, as if *nothing* had passed at Table. This is easily done without appearing singular, or giving any Offence, should you happen to be in the Company of your Superiors. whom it may not be *at all Times* consistent with Prudence to admonish: For, in some Cases, the *very Attempt* would be productive of Sneer, Ridicule, and perhaps Profaneness. It is no Man's *Duty*, to give an ill-timed or an unbecoming Reprimand; and it is the Province of *Reason* to determine how far *such Admonitions* are decent, and likely to do Good or Harm.

As little Children are too often uninstructed, at a Time when they are most susceptible of Improvement, the following Prayer, either for Morning or Evening, will not, I hope, be without Use.

Merciful God and Father who art in Heaven, look down, I beseech thee on a *helpless Child*. Incline my Heart to remember, love, and serve thee, and keep me from every *evil* I thought, Word, and Work. May I grow in *Wisdom*, as I grow in *Stature*, and be in Favour with God, and Man. Make me dutiful to my Parents, loving to all my Relations, obedient to my Teachers, and always in a Disposition to hear *Advice*, and receive *Instruction*. Keep me this Day [or this Night] from every Danger, and grant all my humble Petitions,

Petitions, for the Sake of JESUS CHRIST my Saviour, in whom *alone* I can be accepted.

Our FATHER, &c.

The Grace of our LORD, &c.

As I cannot but be solicitous, lest *any one* (be his Station or Capacity ever so *mean*) should be destitute of proper Assistance for the *Performance of Prayer*: and as many stand in Need of *Forms* for this Purpose, I have, for the Benefit of such, added what I apprehend to be of the *most general Use*. Yet I am very sensible that no *precomposed Forms* can be so compiled, as to suit the *particular Circumstances* of *every Man*; consequently, he must often lie under the *Necessity* of cloathing *his own Thoughts* in *his own Language*, when he approaches the Throne of Grace; and he is undoubtedly *obliged* (as far as he is *able*) to endeavour after proper and reverential Expressions; though it is not to be expected, that an uninstructed Clown should *pray*, any more than *behave*, with the same Elegance as the Gentleman, who has had a liberal Education.

It is to be hoped, that such, as are *Heads of Families* (if they have any Regard to their own eternal Salvation, and that of their Domestics) will not fail to *pray* with them every *Morning*, when it can be complied with, as well as every *Evening*, and that *they*, who have been Patients in an Infirmary, and learned to *pray there*, will be careful to *practise* that necessary Duty at *Home*, with those whom God has committed to their Care, as well as in their own Retirements.

It is of *small Importance* to us what such, or such a Man *does*, or *says*;—or what Notions the *World* may entertain of *outside Appearances*.—*Is the Gospel true?*—If it be, (as it *surely* is, then the ill Lives, Negligences, or Ignorance of *others*, will be no more an Excuse for *our* Disobedience, than the Extravagance of *another* in spending the Means of *his* Subsistence, would be a Relief to *us*, if we had been so indiscreet, as to spend *our own*.

The too *general* Disuse therefore of *Family Prayer*, cannot afford even the least *Shadow* of a Pretence to
coun-

countenance our Neglect of it. Consult the Scriptures, and emulate the *heroick* Resolution of the *brave Joshua*, when he said, even on the Supposition of his being deserted by the whole Nation, "*As for ME and MY House, WE will serve the Lord.*" Josh. xxiv. 15.—We will faithfully *retain, assert, and adorn* Religion.—Surely this *ought* to be the *sincere* Resolution, and *constant* Practice of every Christian Master or Mistress of a Family.—Without *this*, none can *reasonably* expect to have *dutiful* Children, or *faithful* Servants—nor justly hope to have God's Blessing in *this* World, or his Favour and Acceptance in *that* which is to come.—The Depravity of the World, in which we are about to enter, and the various Temptations and Dangers, which we are unable to foresee, or prevent, may well suggest to us the great Propriety of imploring the *Grace, Protection, and Blessing* of God before we go abroad; and will also afford a very strong Argument for uniting our Petitions for it, *as a Family*, if Providence gives us an Opportunity.

It remains to be observed likewise (in order to render the *Influence* of Family Prayer more lasting, and extensive) that were all the Members of every Family *frequently, and seriously* to recollect, that they are *daily* to join together in the solemn Worship of the living God, and to beg for *each other* the Fulness of all heavenly Blessings, the previous and constant Expectation of being *so* engaged, would help to prevent bitter Words, to suppress all Instances of Unkindness, and to unite their Hearts in Love, *that their Prayers might not be hindered*, 1 Pet. iii. 7.

And let it be recollected, on *every* proper Occasion, that to *intercede* for each other, either as a Family, or as a Community in general (how little soever it may *now* be regarded) is one of the *most important* Acts of Christian Charity; the *Means* of bringing down on *others*, Blessings from on high, and of filling *our own* Hearts with extensive, and brotherly Love.—It is also an Act of spiritual Charity, which the *poorest* are so capable of *exercising*, that they may be *even rich* in intercessionary

Alms;

Alms; and surely *none* can allow themselves to despise such Alms, since the *chiefest* of the Apostles *most earnestly* and *frequently* * solicited them.

Having now made what Remarks I proposed on *Forms of Prayer*, and on the Duty and Benefit of *Family Prayer*, I think it necessary to add (as without a conscientious Performance of *this*, in vain will be all my other Directions) some *further* Remarks on Prayer in *general*.

No Man living, from the highest to the lowest, whether he be learned, or unlearned, can have a *reasonable* Excuse for the *entire Omission* of daily Prayer to God; since the *Refusal* of such Homage, is to act contrary to the *Example* and *Command* of Christ, and in Effect to disown his *Power* over us; his *Goodness to us*; his *Justice* to punish Transgressions; and to question his *Faithfulness* in fulfilling his *Promises*.

Nor is PRAYER to be considered *merely as a Tribute*, which we owe to God, but as the *Means* likewise of deriving Strength, and Comfort to our *own Souls*.—And a *sincere* Christian (one *duly* concerned for his spiritual Health) would no more think of omitting *Prayer To-day*, because he practised it *Yesterday*, than of abstaining from Food *To-day*, because he *Yesterday* took it at the proper Season. The *regular Returns* of either may indeed be *omitted* on some *very urgent* Occasion, when the Honour of God, and the Good of our Fellow-Creatures plainly require our *immediate Attendance* on some *other Service*; but the *spiritual Life* can no more be maintained in a long and frequent Neglect of the *one*, than the *natural Life* can be in that of the *other*.—"Our Wants are *daily*; and the Temptations, which draw our Hearts from God to the Things of this World, are *daily*; and, upon *both* these Accounts, our Prayers ought also to be *daily* †."

PRAYER is indeed generally acknowledged by *all*, who profess any Regard to Religion, to be a *necessary*, and *essential* Part of it.—And it should be *considered*, as it

* See Rom. xv. 30.—Col. iv. 12.—1 Tim. ii. 1.

† See Dr. Gibson's (Bp. of London) *Treatise on Family-Devotion*.

really *is*, an excellent *Means* of obtaining an *End*, yet more noble and valuable, than *itself*:—For the *chief* Design of Prayer, is that we may procure the Grace of God, to subdue our corrupt Affections, and to *enable* us to live in this evil World, as Candidates for a much better.—If it produces not *these* Effects, it is only a Lip-Labour, a Tree without Fruit, a specious *Self-Deceit*.

DIRECTION III.

Read carefully every Day some Part of the Holy Scriptures.

WHEN your Prayers in the Morning are *ended*, if your Time will permit, improve yourself by *reading* some Portion of the holy Scripture, or *hearing* it *read*; and that you may the better *profit* by it, beg the *Blessing* of God in the following Prayer, or some * other to the same Effect.

“ O LORD GOD, *who hast given thy Word to be a*
 “ *Lanthorn to my Feet, and a Light to my Path: Give*
 “ *me also the Assistance of thy HOLY SPIRIT, that from*
 “ *the same Word, I may learn thy Will and my Duty,*
 “ *and so direct my Course, as shall most promote thy*
 “ *Glory and my own Salvation, through JESUS CHRIST*
 “ *our Lord. Amèn.*

When you read, or hear the Bible read by *others*, let it be with Reverence: Attend to it, not as the Word of *Men*, but of *GOD*; of *that* GOD, who will regard such as are *poor in Spirit*, have a contrite Heart, and tremble at his Word: Let *this* then be always your Frame, and it will so awaken your *Fear*, and *Attention*, that you will be ever profited, and long retain it.

Be sure likewise that you are *solicitous* to learn your Duty. The new-born Babe *desires* the Milk of the Breast, that he may *grow* by it; and in like Manner, will you *desire* the sincere Milk of the Word, if you are a Child of GOD.—Every Time you read, be careful to apply the Commandments to direct you, the Threat-

* See the second Collect for *Advent* in the Common-Prayer-Book. evenings

enings to deter you from Sin, and the Promises to comfort and encourage you.—Turn Passages of Scripture into *Questions* by Way of Self-Examination, and then form them into *Prayers*: As for Instance, “*Have I humbled myself in the Sight of God?*” (James iv. 10.) I earnestly pray, that I may be *humbled* before Him for my many and great Sins. “*Do I grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?*” (2 Pet. iii. 18.) God grant that I may!

Take Heed, likewise, that you *credit* the Truth: Look on every Sentence in that sacred Book as *true* and *certain*, and as what shall, in its due Time, be accomplished, or has already happened. Thus *believe* in the LORD your GOD, and so you shall be *established*; *believe* his Prophets and Apostles, and so you shall *prosper*: But if the *Word of God* be not regarded with such a *Faith*, you may read it, as long as you live, and it will be of *no Benefit* to you.

In this *divine* Book you will always find (1.) that the *Saviour* is exalted: (2.) that the *Sinner* is humbled: (3.) and that *Holiness* is promoted.—I must therefore earnestly intreat you frequently and thoroughly to *examine* your Principles and Practices by *these three Rules*; which will be *equally certain* to you, as the *Touch-Stone*, on which *Gold* is tried, is to the *Goldsmith*: For unless you perceive, that the *Doctrines* you have embraced tend to *exalt* the Saviour, to *humble* the Sinner, and to *promote* Holiness; or if they *tend* to it, unless they have *that Influence* on your *Practice*, you may be *very sure*, that your Knowledge is not *saving*, and that you have hitherto read *in vain*.

Thus *statedly* I would have you, if possible, to read *some* * Portion of the *Holy Scripture*, Morning and Evening; but if this cannot be done in the *Morning* (as I know,

* Particularly read *some* of these Instances of the Life of Christ which I have here transcribed from Mr. *Burkitt's* Exposition on the New Testament, at the Close of his Remarks on St. *John's* Gospel; where *all*, who have the Book itself in their Possession, may find *proper Comments* on each of the following Heads:

I know, that in the Winter it cannot by many Day-Labourers, and others, who must quit their Houses in the Dark, and leave their Families in Bed) yet in the *Evening* there will certainly be an Opportunity; and if you delight in the Law of God, as you ought to do, you will as certainly embrace it; and not only *then*, but at *other* Times of the Day, when such happy Seasons offer themselves — And you might *chuse* a Text of Scripture, and get it by Heart, in order to *meditate* on it in Bed, and the next Morning, as you work. That you may not *neglect* such Occasions, I shall give you *two important* Directions, as the *principal* Promoters of every religious Duty; and without a due Observance of which, all my *other* Directions must be ineffectual.

I. His early Piety. See *Luke* ii. 46, 47.

II. His Obedience to his earthly Parents. See *Luke* ii. 51.

III. His unwearied Diligence in doing Good. See *Acts* x. 38.

IV. His Humility and Lowliness of Mind. See *Matt.* xi. 29. His eminent Self-Denial. See *Phil.* ii. 7, 8. His Contentment in a low and mean Condition in this World. See *Luke* ix. 58.—*Phil.* iv. 11. He submitted to be a Carpenter, *Mark* vi. 3.

V. His frequent Performance of the Duty of private Prayer. See *Mark* i. 35.—*Luke* vi. 12.

VI. His frequent and serious Performance of the Duty of Praise and Thanksgiving. See *Matt.* xi. 25.—*John* xi. 41.

VII. His Compassion towards those who are miserable, and in Distress. See *Matt.* xx. 34.

VIII. His spiritual, entertaining, and useful Discourse. See *Luke* xiv. 7.—xxiv. 13.

IX. His free, familiar, sociable Behaviour. See *Matt.* xi. 19.—*Luke* v. 29.

X. His Patience under Sufferings and Reproaches. See *1 Pet.* ii. 23.—His Readiness to forgive Injuries. See *Luke* xxiii. 34.

XI. His laying to Heart the Sins, as well as Sufferings, of others. See *Mark* iii. 5.

XII. His Zeal for the public Worship of God. See *John* ii. 17.

XIII. His cheerful Submission to his heavenly Father's Will. See *Matt.* xxvi. 39.

XIV. His Love and Practice of universal Holiness both in Heart and Life. See *Luke* iv. 34.

Watch,

Watch, and Redeem Time.

1. You must *watch before, in, and after* every Duty. *Before*, to prevent Impediments, to take Opportunities, and to mark Occurrences, which may fit you for it:—*In the Duty*, you must watch against Carelessness, and wandering Thoughts:—*And after the Duty*, you must mark what *Improvements* you make; whether you *grow* in Wisdom and Grace, or whether the Duty is *barren, and unfruitful*.

2. You must likewise *redeem Time*.—Remember *Time* is precious, and, *if lost*, is irrecoverable. Every *Friend*, and every *Thing*, will be apt to be stealing this from you, it behoves you therefore to be *very careful* of it:—That you *may* be so, ask yourself every *Morning* soon after you rise, the *following Questions*, and make Memorandums * accordingly.

1. What *Business* have I to do this Day, and in what *Order*?

2. What *Opportunities* can I this Day contrive for doing good to *others*, or for improving *myself*?

3. What *Temptations* am I likely to encounter, and in what *Instances* have I lately failed?

Remember *Punctuality* is the *very Life* of Business; and though, strictly speaking, *not* a Virtue, yet, from

* In the Affairs of *this World*, it is of known *Use* to make *Memorandums* of the several *Businesses* to be transacted every Day. —In our *spiritual Life* it would be of no less *Utility* carefully to *examine* into our Minds, and *imprint* on them, what (if the Expression may be allowed me) I would call our particular *Business* with God; that is to say, what we more especially and immediately *want* with God.—For *my own Part*, it has long been a Custom with me to ask myself (either in my Chamber, or as I ride, or walk) “*What Business have I this Day with God?*” namely, What *Mercies* have I to acknowledge? What *Helps and Assistances* to implore? What *Sins* to repent? &c. &c. I shall only observe, that the great Advantages of *such a Habit* will be more readily felt, than described: I was induced to mention *this* for the Benefit of such sincere Christians, as would be glad of any *likely Method* to advance their *spiritual Improvement*; especially at such *Times* when they are *unavoidably hindered* from performing the more *solemn Exercises*, as *Prayers* of the Closet.

Devo-

its great Use, very nearly *allied* to one; and sure I am that *most* of the Inconveniencies in Life arise from the *Breach* of it.

DIRECTION IV.

Meditate daily on the Word, and Works of GOD.

BEfore I proceed on this Subject, it will be proper to *caution* you, that it is not only lawful, but absolutely necessary, at proper Seasons, to set your Thoughts on the Concerns of *this* Life: The Business of your *respective* Callings is what GOD has appointed you to *do*; and if this is *done* with a due Regard to *Him*, and in Obedience to *his* Commandment, it is so far from *separating* the Heart from him, that it *unites* it more closely to him. Many ingenious Trades demand the most intense Application of the Mind to become Masters of them, and it is not the *Design of Christianity* to make any one *negligent* in the Business of his respective Calling: This *may*, this *must* be done; and yet we may be Heaven-minded. "One Thing is needful," and blessed are those, who, like MARY in the Gospel, "choose that *better Part*, which can never be taken from them."

It being very evident, that the Subject of **THIS DIRECTION**, (*viz. Meditation on the Word, and Works of GOD*) must comprise every Creature in the World, and every Article of Religion, it cannot be expected, that I should enter into a Detail of the *Particulars*; it is sufficient for me to shew, how we may, in this Manner, *begin*, and *end* the Day with God; and to give *Hints* of some Subjects, which are more especially worthy of frequent Contemplation.

In the *Morning*, before your Devotions, banish all *worldly* Thoughts as much as possible, and endeavour to *meditate* on *religious* Subjects; such as the following, which are at *all* Times proper, but *peculiarly so* before Prayer*, Reading the Scripture, or Going to any Place of Worship.

* A State of *Thankfulness* is much to be desired, and cultivated,—as such a State is the *most pleasing* to Almighty God, the *most ornamental*

Meditate on the *unspeakable Glory* of the great GOD and your own *exceeding Sinfulness*, that you may *confess* your Transgressions, with deep Humiliation, and *pray* with Reverence, and godly Fear.

Meditate on the *Blood of Christ*, which was shed to obtain all heavenly Blessings for you; and on his powerful *Intercession* at his FATHER's right Hand, in Behalf of all those who come unto GOD by Him. (See *Heb. iv. 14.*)

Call to Mind, and treasure up in your Memory, some of those exceeding precious * *Promises*, which GOD has

annexed to our holy Religion, and the *most comfortable* to ourselves.—In order therefore to beget and support this *most amiable* and *delightful* Temper, I would advise you just to read over (either before or after your Devotions) the following HINTS—and contemplate on them, when your Time permits;—always remembering, that if you find your Heart in a *fit Frame* for religious *Meditation*, even *that* is just Matter of chearing Reflection, and grateful Praise.

1. Meditations on Mercies past.

Preservations from the Dangers of the Night, as Fire,—Tempests,—Robbery,—Murder,—pernicious Dreams, by which some have been terrified to Distraction, and in which others have even destroyed themselves.

Refreshment of Sleep,—or comfortable Supports from God during a *restless* Night.

How *many* have spent the Night in Prisons.—How *many* in *excessive* Pain of Body, or *inexpressible* Anguish of Mind, weary of their Beds, and their Lives.

2. Meditations on Mercies present.

Cheerfulness of the Sun; or Contrivance of *artificial* Lights to supply its Absence.—All Manner of comfortable Conveniences, at least “ Food and Raiment, and the *Necessaries* of Life, where—
“ with you should learn of the Apostle to be content.” 1 Tim. vi. 8.

3. Meditations on Mercies future.

The Prospect of spending another Day *usefully*; and in the desirable Society of your Relations, or intimate Friends; and the Hope of more effectually securing the Favour of GOD (through the Mediation of Christ) and a happy Immortality, for which you are a *Probationer*.—Whereas *many* were summoned *last* Night, from their Bodies, to appear before GOD.

* Some of these PROMISES you may meet with in the following Scriptures, viz. *Psalms* l. 15.—*Matt.* xxi. 22.—*John* xvi. 23.—1 Tim. iv. 8.—2 Pet. i. 4.—*Heb.* vi. 7.—I have not inserted them *at length*, as you will receive still greater Benefit from reading them *carefully* in your Bible.

made

made to encourage your Prayers, and establish your Faith. — Thus give God your *first Thoughts*, that he may possess the *principal Place* in your Heart; and this will estrange it from *worldly Impediments*, and fit you for every holy Duty.

For the *rest of the Day*, it will be very proper occasionally to meditate, sometimes on the Nature of God, his Attributes, his Love to us in sending his only-begotten Son, that we might live through Him; the Love of Christ, his Life, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension, the infinite Value of his Sufferings, and the Benefits we receive from him, as our Mediator; the sending of the HOLY GHOST, and his Work in sanctifying the Hearts of Believers. — It will be proper often to think on the Excellence of the Soul, the Turpitude, Malignity, and Baseness of Sin, the Beauty of Holiness, the Certainty of Death, the Terrors of Judgment, the Torments of Hell, and the Joys of Heaven. — These, and the wonderful Proofs of God's Care and Regard for us, ought frequently to be the Subject of our *Meditations*.

If we turn our Thoughts from the *Word* to the *Works* of God, every Creature will furnish us with a *Theme*: And we may frame an excellent *Meditation* on it, if we reflect on its Qualities, its Use, the Benefit we receive from it, and the particular instructive *References* made to many of them in the *Book of God*: But then you should not dwell on it only as a *Virtuoso*, merely to gratify your *rational Curiosity*; but like a *Christian*, endeavour to improve it to your *spiritual Advantage*. No one can want an *Instructor*, if he wants not an *Heart*: The very *Sheep* will teach him *Patience*, the *Dog* Faithfulness, the *Serpent* Wisdom, and the *Dove* Innocence: The *Ant* and the *Bee*, will reprove him for his *Sluggishness*; and the *Ox* and the *Ass*, correct him for his *Ignorance*.

While you are undressing, and by Degrees laying aside every Garment, consider of how little Importance it is, of what *Materials* those Garments are made, so long as they answer the *Uses*, and *Demands* of Nature. — The same Nature also requires, at certain Seasons, the most

most superb Apparel of the Great to be put off, and leaves *their* Bodies little more to boast of than your *own*. —When you are doomed to lie down in the Grave, all such *Trifles* must be laid aside; and when you are called to rise at the great Morning of the Resurrection, *other* Cloathing, and *other* Ornaments will be required, without which, both Body and Soul will continue naked, and miserable to all Eternity. To put on CHRIST, and to be united to Him, (as the Apostle expresses it) is your only Security: For “He is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life, and no Man can come unto the FATHER but by Him.” He is the Door into the Sheepfold, by which *alone* you can enter, “there being none other Name given among Men, whereby you must be saved.” How ought you then to be continually found in the *Exercise* of every Grace, which may make it to you *Christ* to live, and *Gain* to die. Such as,

1. Sincere Repentance for your past Sins.
2. Stedfast Faith in our Lord *Jesus Christ*, and a thankful Remembrance of his dying Love.
3. Love to Mankind of all Ranks, and of every Denomination.
4. Resignation to the divine Will, and universal Obedience to it.

These will be Ornaments indeed, clear *Proofs*, that you have “put off the old Man with his Deeds;” and if you are fully satisfied of *this*, Sleep, or Death, will be equally eligible: So that you will be able to say with *David*, “Into thy Hands I commend my Spirit; for thou hast redeemed me, O LORD, thou GOD of Truth.” *Psalms xxxi. 6.*

If you *awake* in the Night, and cannot compose yourself again to rest; or, if the Severity of any Disorder should keep you from Sleeping, I hope you will endeavour to sooth your Anguish, and *beguile* the tedious, or rather, *improve* the important Hours, by following the Prescription which the Divine Physician for all our *spiritual* Maladies, has sent us by the Hand of his Servant *James*; namely “If any be *afflicted*, let Him *pray*” —like *David*,

* James v. 13.

“remem-

“remembering your God in your Bed, and meditating on Him in the Night-Watches.” *Bible Psalms* lxiii. 6.

These *Verses* likewise, which were purposely composed for the Use of the *Sick*, and are more immediately calculated for those, who are in such *afflictive* Circumstances, than is usually to be found in *printed* Collections, may serve at *any* Time, (if committed to Memory) as a profitable *Amusement*, and *Meditation*; especially when they cannot *rest*, or happen to *awake* in the Night.

1. *MY* God, with grateful Heart I'll raise
A daily Altar to thy Praise;
Thy friendly Hand my Course directs,
Thy watchful Eye my Bed protects.
2. When Dangers, Woes, or Death are nigh,
Past Mercies teach me where to fly;
The same Almighty Arm can aid,
Now Sickness grieves, and Pains invade.
3. To all the various Helps of Art,
Kindly thy healing Power impart;
BETHESDA'S BATH * refus'd to save,
Unless an Angel blest'd the Wave.
4. All Med'cines act by thy Decree,
Receive Commission all from thee;
And not a Plant which spreads the Plains,
But teems with Health when Heav'n ordains.
5. Clay and Siloam's Pool † we find,
At Heaven's Command restor'd the Blind;
Hence Jordan's ‡ Waters once were seen,
To wash a Syrian Leper clean.
6. But grant me nobler Favours still,
Grant me to know, and do thy Will;
Purge my foul Soul from every Stain,
And save me from eternal Pain.

* See John v. 4. † John ix. 7. ‡ 2 Kings v. 10.

7. *Can such a Wretch for Pardon sue!
My Sins, my Sins, arise to View!
Arrest my trembling Tongue in Pray'r,
And pour the Horrors of Despair.*
8. *But oh! regard my contrite Sighs,
My tortur'd Breast, my streaming Eyes;
To me thy boundless Love extend,
My God, my Father, and my Friend.*
9. *These lovely Names, I ne'er could plead,
Had not thy Son vouchsaf'd to bleed;
His Blood procures for Adam's Race,
Admittance to the Throne of Grace.*
10. *When Vice hath shot its poison'd Dart,
And conscious Guilt corrodes the Heart;
His Blood is all-sufficient found,
To draw the Shaft, and heal the Wound.*
11. *What Arrows pierce so deep, as Sin?
What Venom gives such Pains within?
Thou great Physician of the Soul!
Rebuke my Pangs, and make we whole.*
12. *O! if I trust thy sov'reign Skill,
With due Submission to thy Will,
Sickness, and Death, shall both agree,
To bring me, LORD, at last to THEE.*

Thus I have given you my Thoughts on the Duty of *Meditation*, and on *some* of the Subjects most proper for it. I have only further to *add*, when you are *meditating*, let your Thoughts be *intent*: Keep to *one* Subject, till your Heart be affected with it. If you think of *God*, cease not to think of Him, till you admire and adore: If you think of his *Knowing* every Thing, and *being every where present*, double your Watch over yourself: If of his *Mercy*, have a just Indignation against yourself for *Abuses* of it: If of his *Justice*, tremble before Him.—If you meditate on *Christ*, cease not, till *Love* has melted your Heart: If on his *Death*, apply the *Efficacy* of it for *your own* Redemption:—If you

I

think

think on the *Evil of Sin*, desist not, till your Heart *abhors* it: If on the Extent, and Purity of the *divine Law*, awe your Soul to *Obedience*. Without this *practical* Recollection, your *Meditations* will rather chill, than warm your Devotion; but *thus improved*, they will add Life, and Strength to your *religious Exercises*.

D I R E C T I O N V.

Converse frequently on religious Subjects *, and for that Purpose; be particularly careful in the Choice of your Company, and in keeping a strict Guard over your Tongue.

THAT your *Conversation* may be *edifying* to yourself, and others, be watchful to prevent its turning on idle, or improper Topicks: And, in order to prevent it,

* The following *Hints*, will shew the *Use* of writing down suitable Materials for *Conversation* with the *Afflicted*. As for Instance, Observe to them, that *Afflictions* are appointed by the *Wisdom*, and *Goodness* of GOD, which is an Argument for *Resignation*, and *Comfort*: Remark the Examples of *Eli*, *Job*, and *Christ*: Urge, that *Afflictions* are designed as *Blessings*, and that God is out of *Kindness* severe.—If it be *objected*, that *Affliction* is *peculiarly* calamitous; it may be answered, GOD, the unerring GOD, prescribed it, and *therefore* it is proper. If it be enquired what *Benefits* arise from it? Reply, that it weans us from the World, and may bring us to Christ, after *whom*, while He was on Earth, not the Rich and Gay, but the Poor and *Afflicted*, sought, and still seek; that Christ has Pardon of Sin, the Gift of the Holy Spirit, and eternal Life to bestow; that we should therefore be frequent in *Prayer*: Recommend *this* by the Examples of *Daniel*, *David*, and *Hannah*: Assert, that *Prayer* will not tend to deject, but to elevate the Mind: Advise *Cheerfulness*: Observe, that *this Disposition* under Misfortunes, or a Release from them, is not to be obtained by the Visits of worldly Company, but by *Prayer*, and consulting the *Scriptures*, the Treasury of *Comfort*; that *earthly* Friends cannot give it; that God is both *able*, and *willing* to bestow that Peace which the *World*, and *worldly* Things, cannot give; a Peace, which surpasses all Understanding, and without which the greatest Monarch on Earth is an Object, not of Envy, but of *Compassion*.

it, the best Guard will be an Introduction of some religious Subjects, where it can be done with Propriety, the Particulars of which, being as numerous as those of heavenly Contemplation, I need not name.—The Things most worthy of your Meditation, are most worthy of your Discourse, and of those I have already taken Notice; only as I there gave you a Caution previous to your Meditations, I will here add some others with Regard to the Government of your Tongue in general, which I must beg of you carefully to observe; for says St. James, “If any Man pretends to be religious, and bridle not his Tongue, this Man’s Religion is vain.” James i. 26.

First, Let the glorious Name of Almighty God never be mentioned, unless on weighty, and just Occasions; and even then, let your Heart always be affected with the most serious Consideration of that eternal Being before whom you speak. God is highly dishonoured, when his Name is bandied to and fro in common Conversation, without due Respect of his incomprehensible Greatness.

Secondly, When you speak of your Neighbour, speak all the Good you know of him truly and readily, whether he be Friend, or Foe; yet always behind his Back, rather than before his Face.—If any Thing evil, or derogatory to his Character must be published, be sure you speak not by Hearsay, but according to your personal

passion.—After the same Manner we may make Memorandums of suitable Heads for conversing on other religious Subjects, as for Instance, with a presumptuous or desponding Sinner. If we converse with one of a curious Disposition, we might remark the Wisdom of God, shewn in the Wonders discoverable by the Microscope in the minute Creation. But it is needless to give any farther Instances, as my Meaning is sufficiently explained; I only wish that a due Regard may be paid to it.

See the celebrated Dr. Lucas’s little Tract (Price Two Pence) on the Influence, and Regulation of Conversation. “Lord, teach us to pray” (Luke xi. 1.) was the Request of one of the Disciples in the Name of the rest. Lord teach us to converse judiciously and effectually, should be the hourly Petition of every Christian, as Conversation is so powerful an Instrument of Good, or Evil.

D

Knowledge;

SPIRITUAL DIRECTIONS

Knowledge; nor even *then*, without a lawful Calling, as when you are summoned before a Magistrate to bear Witness to the Truth, or when Hurt *has* arisen, or may arise to *others* from the *Evil*; or when you know of any one, who has *Authority* to redress it. In such Cases, and to such Persons, we *ought* to speak of the *Evil* we know of our Neighbours, but not otherwise. To uncover the Nakedness of our Brethren, without a just Calling, is extremely unlawful, and exceedingly pernicious: It always begins in Self-Love, and ends in Contention.—An impertinent Meddling in the Concerns of *others*, is a direct Breach of that admirable Rule of the Apostle's, "*Study to be quiet, and mind your own Business,*" (1 Thess. iv, 11.)—And it is well known what violent Animosities, furious Resentments, and implacable Hatreds arise from a *Disregard* to it.—Indeed, where you have *Authority*, apprehend it may be well received, or are in any Degree *personally* concerned, it will be quite proper to tell your Neighbour *Himself* of his Faults: Our LORD's Rule is,—"*If thy Brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.*" Luke xvii. 3.

Thirdly, When you speak of *yourself*, let it be modestly, without Vanity, or Boasting. Never *praise yourself* without absolute Necessity, as when you are unjustly traduced, or in Defence of your own Innocence: It would, however, be imprudent to speak any Thing, which tends to your own Disadvantage, or proclaim your own Faults. Let your Speech be sincere, honest, and edifying; let it be fitted to the Time, the Place, the Occasion, and to him, with whom you converse; and let it tend to the Glory of God, the Disparagement of Sin, and the Defence of good Men, and good Things; and it will be an Argument to *others* of a gracious Heart, well stored with Wisdom, and replenished with Virtue.

Flee *every Temptation*, which is likely to draw you into *Sin*; and weigh well, and often, the *Precept* given by St. John, as a tender Father to his dear Child, under that beautiful and expressive Phrase, "*Little Children,*"
" (too

"(too apt to be pleased with every Toy and Trinket)
 "keep yourselves from Idols;" not only from *those* of the
Heathens, but from *every* Sort which might alienate
 your Regard from God. Every Allurement, by which
 the Devil entices you to *Sin*, such as Riches, Honour,
 Pleasures, Company, and Sensualities of any Kind,
 are the several *Idols* (Toys, or Trinkets) which he pre-
 sents as the *Objects* of Admiration and Worship: It
 is just the same to him *which* you take: Whatever draws
 off your Affections from God, will *equally* answer his
 Ends. His Temptation of *Christ* is represented to us
 under the Device of shewing him all the Kingdoms of
 the World, and the Glory of them, as we read in *Matt.*
iv. 8, 9.—Be ever *observant* therefore of the *Directions*
 here given, and then *none* of these *Idols* can gain the
 Ascendency in your Heart.

D I R E C T I O N VI.

Be *frequent* in Examination of yourselves; es-
 pecially *before Prayer*, that you may fully
know your Offences, and be truly *humbled*
 for them.

SUCH, as have Leisure, would do well to *try* them-
 selves *occasionally* by the *longer* Form of Self-
 Examination, and *every* Evening by its *Abridgement*:
 Such, as are in a frequent Hurry, and subject to the
 Authority of *others*, using the same Method, as often
 as they *conveniently* can. Conscience will answer all the
 Questions here stated *in a few Minutes*, and to these,
 such others may be added, as any one's Station in Life
 or particular Circumstances, may require.—Those, who
 can *write*, I would advise to remark, on a Slip of Paper,
 the *Sins*, of which they find themselves guilty. *Such*
Sins should be reviewed by Way of *Caution*, penitently
 lamented, prayed, and striven against; and God should
 be *thanked*, with the utmost Gratitude, that he still
 permits a longer State of Probation, or Trial. But
particularly write down the *Reasons*, which at *any* Time

make you *afraid to die*. Consider them *well*, and opposite to them write down the proper Methods to *prevent* such Fears *for the future*; and the best *Arguments* you can get to fortify yourself against them at the *present Time*.—Consult likewise, some *experienced* Christian, if you have such a Bosom Friend, in whom you can entirely confide.

Self-Examination is a most important Duty, as it acquaints us with our own *Hearts*.—Never, therefore, examine yourself *slightly*, and only as a *Thing of Course*, but always *remember* that this *Examination* is made in the Presence of the all-seeing God; and that you may be instantly summoned, by sudden Death, before his Tribunal, there to have your *Sincerity* tried.

* Heads of Self-Examination,

As to the Breaches of Duty towards God, Neighbours, and Selves.

Duty to God.

1. **D**O I sincerely believe in God the Father, in Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost?—Have I the *same Faith* in my Heart, which I profess in my Lips?—Do I live in an *habitual* Sense of God's continual *Presence* with me; and am I careful to *obey* him to the utmost

* This *longer* Form of Self-Examination should be *frequently* and *well* considered, especially every *Sunday*; and the *Abridgement* (or *shorter* Form) is intended to be learned *by Heart*, as it may be serviceable to the Patients in an Infirmary, when they cannot make Use of this Book, or to *others*, when they have no Leisure to enter into a *longer*, and *more particular* Examination. A Method even shorter than *this*, may be used when much pressed in point of Time; namely, by dividing the Day into four Parts, the Morning,—the Forenoon,—the Afternoon, and the Evening—considering briefly, but very attentively, what the *Behaviour* has been in *each* of them.—This I would call a *mental Self-Examination*; and we shall be *able*, with great Expedition, to recollect our Failings, under the same general Heads of Duty to God, Neighbour, and Self.—But we should not *content* ourselves with this *short mental* Examination, when there is Leisure and Opportunity for doing it *more at large*.

of my Power?—Do I acknowledge myself accountable to him for all my Thoughts, Words, and Actions; my Repentance, or Obstinacy; my Belief, or Disbelief; my Obedience, or Disobedience?

2. Do I hold myself *obliged* to worship God both in *publick* and in *private*?—Do I take a *Delight* in my Duty, and perform it *daily*, as often as I have Opportunity?—Do I *regularly* comply with his holy Ordinances; particularly that of receiving the blessed Sacrament?—Do I *thankfully* acknowledge the great Works of *Creation, Preservation, Redemption, and Sanctification*?—Do I make the *Will of God* the *Rule* of my Actions; and do I contentedly *submit* to his Will under all Circumstances of Life?

3. Am I *zealous* for God's Honour; and do I shew a due *Reverence* to his holy Name? Am I guilty of no Profaneness, Cursing, or Swearing? And do I discountenance it in *others* as much as in my Power?—Do I prefer Things *temporal* to Things *eternal*, and seek, by the *Whole* of my Conduct, to advance the Glory of God?—Have I no Anxiety, or Murmurings, with Regard to the Things of *this* Life; and am I contented in *that* State, wherein it has pleased God to *place* me?—Do I not (presuming on God's Mercy through Christ) persist in *wilful* Sins? Do I on *any* Occasion distrust his *Providence*, or fatherly Care of me?

Duty to Neighbours.

1. Have I *provoked* my Neighbour by any proud, surly, contemptuous, and ill-natured Speeches, or Actions?—Have I *injured* him by slandering, lying, deceiving, or defrauding him on any Occasion?—Have I endeavoured to take away his *good Name*, or lessen his Character and Reputation?—Should I *rejoice* at any Evil, which might befall him?—Do I *secretly wish* his Death, or any Harm, or Loss to happen to him?

2. Have I endeavoured to tempt, or draw him into Sin, by any *indecent*, or *evil Example*, which I have shewn?—Do I sincerely *wish* for his Welfare both spiritual and temporal, and, as Opportunity serves, attempt

to promote it?—Do I give him *proper Admonitions*, and *friendly Advice*, whenever I see Him stand in *Need* of these, or judge that such might be useful, and can be given Him with *Propriety*, or do I receive the *like Advice* kindly from him?—Do I make *Amends* for any *Injuries* I have done Him designedly, or by *Accident*; and have I *true Compassion* and *Concern* for Him, when under any *Affliction* or *Want*; and do I endeavour to help, and relieve Him?

3. Do I heartily *forgive* all the *Injuries* I have ever received from Him? and do I heartily desire and endeavour to live in *Peace* and *Friendship* with Him?—If He continues in *Enmity* * with me, do I pray to God for Him, and find in myself a sincere *Disposition* to return *Good* for *Evil*?

* One of the *most illustrious*, but, at the same Time, one of the *most difficult* of the *Christian Duties*, is “To *love* our *Enemies*; “and to *pray* for the *Welfare*, and *Amendment* of *them*, who do “spitefully use, and persecute us.”—As therefore *Love*, and *Charity* towards *all such*, is so repeatedly and strongly enjoined us by our Lord, we are under an *indispensible* *Obligation* to comply with it; and if we duly *observe* this *Precept*, we shall soon find the *beneficial Effects* of it.—But let none imagine, that this *Injunction* is meant to produce *Insensibility*. Our Creator has endued the human Mind with a *Sense* of *Resentment*, as the necessary *Means* of *Self-Preservation*. This limits the *Use* of *Anger*; any farther *Extension* is the *Abuse* of it. “Be ye *angry*, and sin not.”—*Violent Wrath*, with its usual *Attendant Malice*, is a most dangerous *spiritual Disease*; the peculiar *Remedy* for which, is *servent Prayer*; and happily in the *Power* of *every one*. This is equally salutary with *Regard* to Him, who gives, and to Him, who receives, a *Provocation*. The *Injurer* of his *Neighbour*, and the *Self-Avenger*, should alike be considered, as *spiritually diseased*; and both are, consequently, *Objects* of *Compassion*, rather than of *Hatred*.—*Prayer* for our *Enemy* is the *Means* to obtain the *Grace* of God for his *Conversion*; and, at the same Time to preserve our own *Breast* serene, and out of *Danger* from any *Infection* from our *Intercourse* with Him. It is not only a necessary *Act* of *Obedience* to our *Blessed Saviour's* express *Command*, but it is the strongest *Proof*, that “we are not overcome of *Evil*, but overcome *Evil* “with *Good*.”

Duty to Ourselves.

1. Am I, in my *Conversation*, vain-glorious, subject to *Passion*, and easily provoked; or do I preserve on every Occasion a *Decency*, *Modesty*, and *Humility*, without over-valuing *myself*, or despising *others*?

2. Am I diligent in my *Business*, or *Calling*? and do I employ my leisure Time *innocently*, and, to the best of my Power, *usefully* to myself, and others?—Am I contented with my Condition, free from covetous Desires, or envious Repinings at the Prosperity of *others*?—Do I indulge myself in any Excess? Am I careful to keep myself temperate and chaste, not only in *Act*, but in *Word*, and even in *Thought*?—Do I indulge myself in *unnecessary* Sleep, and in *needless* * Amusements, Recreations, or Diversions of any Kind?—Am I subject to *Pride*, *Ostentation*, or *Extravagance* in my Expences or Apparel?—How have I *discharged*, or wherein have I *neglected*, the *relative* Duties required of me, either as

* As some in *higher* Ranks of Life, than those, for whom these DIRECTIONS were *immediately* intended, may probably look into it, I think it not improper, for *their* Sakes, to add, that I am very sensible, not only of the *Innocence*, but *Expediency* of AMUSEMENTS, when well chosen and moderate, when used not merely “to pass away TIME,” but to unbend the Mind, or give Ease and Health to the Body; and thus render us more fit for *profitable* Employments:—I would therefore, by no Means, have this Question so understood, as condemning Amusements *in general*, or insinuating, that CHRISTIANITY and CHEARFULNESS were *inconsistent* with each other.—My Design is only to guard against *excessive* Indulgencies of this Kind; against turning them into the *principal Business* of Life, instead of admitting them by Way of *Recreation*.—And since it is not uncommon, even for such as are in the *main* serious, to squander away too many of their *inestimable* Moments in very *Vanity*, this Caution cannot be deemed *needless*.—May none of my Readers forget that TIME is a Talent, for which we must give *Account*! That our *great Master* has expressly commanded us by his Apostle, “TO REDEEM IT:” That it is the Ground-work of *all* religious Improvement, and religious Service; and that to *trifle* it away, hurts the *Power* of Christianity in our Hearts; as a Worm at the Root of a Plant, obstructs its Growth, imperceptibly indeed, but effectually; perhaps destructively.

a Parent

a Parent or Child, a Brother or Sister, a Husband or Wife, a Servant or Master?

3. Am I *more intent* on the Care of my *Body*, or my *temporal* Affairs, than about the Interests of my *Soul*, and the Security of my *eternal* Salvation?—What *Progress* have I lately made in subduing my *constitutional Sins*?—How have I this Day behaved under any sudden Vexation, or Temptation to those Sins, which *most easily* beset me?—Have I well considered, that the *World of Spirits* must soon open on me, perhaps this very Night?—Do I sincerely desire, and labour to *fit*, and *prepare* myself for Death, not only by *repenting* of my Sins, but by *forsaking* them; and by using all those *Means* the holy Scriptures teach me, to obtain a *Pardon*, and to secure the *Favour* of my great Redeemer?—Do I startle at the Thoughts of a *Separation* of Soul and Body; or can I compose myself in a *resigned* * *Disposition*, either to sleep, or die?

* This is the *Temper* which the Believers of old *always* enjoyed, (see 2 *Cor.* v. 1, 2.) and which we should *pray* to obtain;—remembering that *Death* hath no Power to *hurt* that Soul, which is *united* by *Faith* (see *John* xvii. 21.) to the great Redeemer, who is supreme Lord of the unseen World; (or, as the Scripture expresses it) “*has the Keys of Hell, and of Death.*” *Rev.* i. 18.—I cannot easily express *this Temper*, which I would be so glad to cultivate and promote, better than the Words of *Cowley*:

“*Be satisfy'd and pleas'd with what Thou art;*

“*All cheerfully, and well, th' allotted Part.*

“*Improve the present Hour: Be thankful for the past;*

“*And neither fear, nor wish the Approaches of the last.*”

What a cheerful and resigned Spirit is here!—The *Attainment* of which will be the greatest Happiness to *ourselves*; is one of the chief *Ends* of the Christian Religion; the most *amiable*, and, consequently, the most effectual Method of recommending it to others.

The Archangel MICHAEL, is represented by *Milton*, as giving the same Kind of Advice to our Progenitor ADAM, alarmed at the *painful* Passages to Death.

“*Nor love thy Life, nor hate; but what thou livest,*

“*Live well; how long, or short, permit to Heaven:*

“*And patiently attend thy Dissolution.*”

A shorter

A shorter Form of Self-Examination,

(being an Abridgement of the preceding Heads.)

Duty to God.

1. **D**O I *believe* in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost?
And does *such Belief* influence my Heart, and Life?

2. Have I omitted or carelessly performed my religious Duties? or have I forgotten God in the *Intervals* of them?

3. What Sins have I this Day committed in Thought, Word, or Deed? Have I endeavoured to keep up a Sense of God's *Presence*, and *Providence* all the Day long; to approve myself *in his Sight*, and to promote *his Glory* in all my Actions?

Duty to Neighbours.

1. Have I in any Respect injured my Neighbour in Body, Property, or Character?

2. Am I desirous of his Welfare, both spiritual and temporal? And if I have *injured* Him, am I desirous of making him *Reparation*, as far as in my Power?

3. Do I sincerely *forgive* all Injuries received from Him, as I humbly hope that God in Christ will forgive me?

Duty to Ourselves.

1. Do I strive to subdue all my irregular Desires and evil Affections?

2. Am I leading a sober, righteous, and godly Life, or am I not?

3. Am I more intent on securing my *eternal* Happiness than on any of the Pursuits, or Advantages of *this* World? And am I *now* in that State, in which I would *chuse* to be found at the Approach of Death?

DIRECTION VII.

Remember * to keep holy the Sabbath-Day; to join in the publick Worship of God; and particularly to receive the holy Sacrament.

THE *conscientious Observance* of the Sabbath is the best *Preservative* to Virtue and Religion, as even the *Neglect*, much more the *Profanation* of it, is the most *general Inlet* to Vice and Irreligion.—The *Reasonableness*, as well as the *Necessity* of such an Observance are very evident: And, if once *your Heart* is intent on securing your Salvation, you will (though many are secretly glad of any Pretence, as an Excuse for their Absence) be truly *concerned*, whenever any unavoidable Circumstances *prevent* your Attendance on publick Worship. You will pray earnestly to God for his *Blessing* on the *Means*, and be more and more convinced of the *Sinfulness* of profaning the Lord's Sabbath.

And the same Spirit of Religion, which obliges you to a *conscientious* Observance of the *publick Duties*; will not suffer you to be *unmindful* of the Duties of a more *private* Nature; such as the serious Recollection of the Word preached, and a *personal* Application either of *that*, or of any other Part of the Worship to *yourselves*: Reading the Scriptures, or other religious Books at Home—Family, as well as secret Prayer—Examination of your Heart and Life, that you may see how the Account stands between God, and your Soul—Instruction of those under your Care, or your Endeavours to procure Instruction from them for your *own* Improvement.—Add to *these* your refraining from every Liberty and every Freedom, which are *inconsistent* with the Behaviour of a sincere Christian on *that* Day, which the great Creator of Heaven and Earth hath set apart for *his own* Worship, and Service.

* God has enjoined us to take *particular* Notice of the *fourth* Commandment, by putting the Word *remember* before it, since, on the due Observation of *this*, our Disposition and Ability to observe *all the other* must, in a good Measure, depend.

How aggravated is the *Guilt* of profaning the Sabbath! How shocking is it, when this Leisure, this Cessation from all Business, which God has wisely and mercifully enjoined on this Day of *Rest*, in Order that you might improve, in the Knowledge, and Grace of Christ, is perverted, and made an Occasion of Sin, either by a Disrelish of the proper Employment of that sacred Day; by travelling * on it, not out of *Necessity*, but *Choice*; by insignificant and unmeaning Visits, and by seeking *Amusements*, which are, at that Season, unwarrantable.—Imprint on your Memory, and often meditate on the two last Verses of the fifty-eighth Chapter of *Isaiah*.

As in public Worship you must be sensible, that it is your *Duty* diligently to attend to your *Minister*, and devoutly to accompany Him; and as I have already sufficiently expressed the *Temper of Mind*, in which you ought to perform *Acts of Devotion*, I need say no more to these Particulars. (See *Direction* the Second.) I shall therefore only subjoin *Forms* suitable to the Occasion.

An introductory Prayer, which may be used before publick, or private Worship.

GIVE me, O LORD, a deep Reverence to thy Presence; and grant me the important Aid of thy holy Spirit to help my Infirmities, that in every Attendance on thy Worship, I may aim at thy Glory, and obtain thy Blessing, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen*.

A concluding Prayer, which may be used after publick, or private Worship.

PARDON, O LORD, the Coldness of my Devotion, and the Wanderings of my Thoughts: Graciously accept my imperfect Services, and enable me to

* The merciful, and benevolent Creator intended the Sabbath as a Day of *Rest* for the *Cattle*, as well as for *Man*; and it is a Degree of *Cruelty*, as well as a *Breach* of the divine Commandment, to keep our *Cattle* on *Sundays*, except in Cases of absolute *Necessity*.

grow *wiser* and *better*, by every Attendance on thy Worship, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*

When you receive the *Sacrament*, from which I hope you will never *absent* yourself, endeavour to keep the Thoughts of your Duty, and the Blessings you desire, alive on your Hearts at Home, or in Church before you receive, by *meditating* on the following (or the like) Texts. *Psalms* li. 17.—*Jerem.* iii. 12. 13.—*Matth.* vi. 24.—*Matth.* xxii. 37, 39.—*Gal.* iii. 24.—*Tit.* ii. 14.—*2 Tim.* ii. 12.—*1 John* ii. 25.

After you have received, and are retired to your Seat, or returned Home, you may meditate (as you have Time) on some of the following (or the like) Texts.—See *Matth.* xi. 29. xxvi. 4.—*Luke* xi. 13.—*John* v. 14.—xiv. 27.—xvi. 23.—*Rom.* viii. 32.—*2 Cor.* v. 15.—*2 Cor.* vi. 16.—*Heb.* xii. 1. 2. For which Purpose it is desirable, that every Communicant should bring to Church a Pocket Bible, which will be the best Companion to the Altar, and very useful for the better understanding, and retaining in the Memory, the Lessons of the Day read by the Minister, as well as for turning to the Texts here recommended for Meditation. And indeed I could wish, that the old Custom of bringing a BIBLE to Church was more generally observed by Persons of all Ranks.

D I R E C T I O N VIII.

Never think you have made a *sufficient* Progress in Religion, but labour with persevering Diligence to attain as far as in you lies, the *highest* Degree of Holiness, in your appointed Station.

TO make us *holy* is the *principal* Design of Christianity, “the one Thing needful,” not only to save us from the *Punishment* of Sin in Hell, but from the *Dominion* of it, even while here on Earth: * Let it therefore be your *principal* Care to be in a *progressive* State of Holiness; being fully sensible, at the same Time, that

* See *1 John* iii. 5, 8. and *Titus* ii. 14.

the Obedience, and Sacrifice of the divine Redeemer, "who, although he was found in Fashion as a Man, yet thought it not Robbery to be equal with God, because in him dwelleth the Fulness of God bodily," is our only Hope that any Obedience or Perfection of ours can meet with Acceptance.—God has set *Perfection* in the full View of his Servants; not as what they shall immediately attain *, but as what they ought ardently to pursue, by walking in the Light, as *He* is in the Light, and "purifying themselves, as *He* is pure." While we are here, we never arrive to full *Maturity*; nor are we all of one Growth; but there are *little Children*, *young Men*, and *Fathers* in Christianity. Hence it is, that our Lord compares his Kingdom to a Grain of Mustard-seed, which gradually expands itself into a great Tree.

There are *little Children*, spiritually speaking, just born, hanging as it were, on the Breast.—These know their heavenly Parent, though they know little else, and call after God, though imperfectly, and with a stammering Tongue. They desire the *sincere Milk* of the Word, that they may grow; and yet much gross Ignorance, Folly, and Weakness remain in them.—Such Christians are liable to two great Errors. The one is, when they find the Comforts of Religion: The other when they find them not. While their Comforts continue, they are so much affected, that they are ready to neglect their lawful Callings, as a great Hindrance to their spiritual Exercises; and from this mistaken Zeal, they are apt to be remiss, and unprofitable, and to censure others.—When Comfort is wanting, they are greatly dejected, so as to give their Christian Associates real Concern, and much Perplexity, how to encourage, and support them

* That you may make the better Progress in Religion, I would above all Things, (if you have Leisure and Capacity,) recommend to you the keeping a *Diary*, or daily Account how you employ your Time. This would be of great Use, both with regard to your spiritual and temporal Concerns.—But if you cannot keep a *Diary* in so full a Manner, as you could wish; yet you may occasionally commit to Writing, a few Observations on the State of your Mind, and your Progress, or Decline in Religion; which the oftener they are repeated, the greater Advantage you will receive.

E

rationally.

rationaly.—Like unskilful Swimmers out of their Depth, they are continually sinking; and it is difficult to keep their Heads above Water.

Young Men are a Kind of *middle* Christians; not so well versed in their Christian Warfare, as the *Fathers*; nor yet so weak and unexperienced, as the *Children*. These may be considered, as in the *Midst* of the Combat against their spiritual Adversaries, as resisting and subduing those unruly Desires, and Passions, by which they are notwithstanding sometimes overcome. Now the *Heart* is at Peace; anon disturbed by inward Suggestions, and outward Attacks. St. *John* warns them of this, and animates them to the Combat, by assuring them of *Victory*: “I have written unto you *young Men*,” says he, because ye are strong, and the *Word* of “God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the “wicked One.” 1 *John* ii. 13.

Fathers are such Christians, as have long been accustomed to distinguish, and been exercised in discerning Good from Evil.—Such as have long been acquainted with the Duties of Holiness, have obtained Grace of God to walk more comfortably, and constantly in the Paths of the Gospel, than *young Men*, or little *Children*. These *Fathers* being habituated to an heavenly Course, are brought to delight in the Law of the Lord, as the fullest Liberty; so that they, compared with weak Christians, may be called perfect, though they are not arrived to a complete Growth. Their *Thoughts*, and *Desires*, are not always such as they would, but are frequently rebellious, and such as they would not;—and by this Means their best *Actions* are mixed with Corruption, and their *Thoughts* favour of the Flesh, which abideth in them.

On the *Whole* then it is evident, that these several Degrees of Christians have great Need to strive earnestly for high Perfection. The Apostle St. *Paul*, who was one of the first Rate, expressly says, “that he did not “account himself already perfect, but that He pressed “towards the Mark for the Prize of the high Calling “of God in Christ Jesus.” We may therefore conclude that sinless Perfection cannot be obtained on this

Side of the Grave:—Yet while *Sin remains*, it must be pursued to its Destruction, and Perfection sought after with persevering Diligence.—*Every Christian* is a Soldier by Profession, and can never be discharged, till the Enemy is totally subdued. A *Progress* in Holiness there must be; and when this is *not continued*, it is too sad a Sign of Insincerity. Where no *Growth* is, there is the greatest Reason to suspect, that no *Life* is. The *Water*, which Christ gives his Followers, is a *Well* of Water, which never ceases bubbling up, till it extends to everlasting Life.

Should you enquire *how* you must labour to attain *Perfection*? The Answer is ready—Observe these *eight Directions*. You will remember, that in *these* are the *Means* of Grace.—Labour by these *Means* to *perfect* every Christian Grace, and to *subdue* every sinful *Habit*; for in this consists that *Perfection*, which I am intreating you so earnestly to acquire.—If *no Qualifications* are necessary to become meet Partakers with the Saints in Light, to *what Purpose* can you suppose that the *Example* of Jesus Christ, and the *Perfection* of your heavenly Father, are proposed for *Imitation*? Can you believe, that “*God is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity*,” and yet can you expect to be received into his Presence in your *Sins*, and *Pollutions*? Ah! *no*.—Deceive not yourselves—None, who are *impure*, can enter those happy Mansions; nor, if they should, are they *capable* of relishing the Bliss, which is *there* enjoyed, as I have already fully observed under my *first Direction*.—No! Heaven must cease to be Heaven, where *such* are its Inhabitants: These are self-evident Truths.

Consider in what Manner you become *capable* of enjoying the good Things of *this* Life. The wise, and royal Preacher *Solomon* tells you, and Experience teaches you, that “*the Light is sweet, and a pleasant Thing it is to behold the Sun*.” Yet for this *Pleasure* you are wholly indebted to that astonishing Piece of heavenly Workmanship, the *Eye*, and the several Organs peculiarly fitted to receive the Light! Let the *Eye* be *dis-tempered*, and all Objects, which *in themselves* remain

the *same*, with Regard to *you*, lose their Beauty, and Lustre. Let *the Eye* be totally lost, then the Sense, which depends on it, is lost also, and "*the whole Body is full of Darknefs.*"—The most exquisitely delicate Food affords no Relish to a *vitiated Palate*, nor can it sit easy on the *palled Stomach*.—The most enchanting Musick cannot charm either "*the deaf Adder, who stoppeth her Ears,*" or that unhappy Man, who has no longer the *Use* of them.

So it is with the *Soul* un sanctified.—All *Traces of the divine Image* are defaced, by a Course of Sin.—Such an one sees no Comeliness in the Saviour: He has neither the *Inclination* to desire, the *Means* to obtain, or a *Capacity* to enjoy any of those *Blessings* (beautiful and heavenly as they are) which God has prepared for those, who *love Him*.

If *you* therefore are thus *sinful*, and continue thus, you will be *fit* only for the Society of those apostate Spirits, to whose Temptations you have yielded, under whose rebellious Banners you have enlisted, and whose Qualities you have imitated; and as you was *fit* only for their Society, so you must be their *Companions* in those Regions of Despair, and Woe, "*Where the Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched.*"—Oh! consider *this*, ye who forget God, and treasure up Wrath unto the Day of Wrath.—As for *you*, ye blessed Children of your heavenly Father, who *love* our Lord Jesus Christ in *Sincerity*, and earnestly *pray* to be made more and more *like him*, proceed with Courage; and make *daily Advances* in the blessed Path, which you have wisely chosen: "*Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your Labour is not vain in the Lord.*"



P O S T.

P O S T S C R I P T.

1. **A**S there are *many* Points of Controversy and Speculation, which frequently have been destructive of *true Piety*, and preventive of that *regular* Course of Devotion, which I have here described; I hope my Readers will not *perplex* themselves about such Points: Such I mean as relate to the Counsels, Decrees, or supernatural Operations of the Almighty, which He has not thought fit to reveal, or explain in his *written Word*; for every contentious Disputation *about* them, or curious searching *into* them, may be looked on at least as the Offspring of a vain and fruitless Curiosity, if not suggested by the Tempter, and Enemy of Mankind; and moreover all *peremptory* Decisions of them, as a Compound of human *Weakness*, and *Arrogance*.—However important *such Points* may seem to *some*, I am fully satisfied, they are of very little Importance towards the *great End* of our blessed Saviour's Coming into the World; namely, *the Salvation of Man*.—This Persuasion of Mind is *to me* a Preservative against *all religious Doubts*; the great Comfort of which, and the Hope, that *others* may reap the same invaluable *Benefit*, make it *necessary* for me to be more explicit on this Subject.

2. I must likewise beg Leave to recommend, in the strongest Manner, (what is indeed in a great Measure the *Consequence* of my former Position: I mean) very favourable Thoughts of, and *Expressions* towards, those pious and sincere Christians, who *differ* in their Sentiments concerning the *ceremonial* Part of Religion, or any Matter not *expressly commanded*, or *clearly revealed* in Scripture. *This*, if not the *very Essence* of Christian Charity, ought, I am sure, to be *inseparably connected* with it. However, so far as the *two Particulars* I have here mentioned may be *distinguished* from each other, I shall submit a few *Remarks on each*, to the Consideration of my Readers.

1. *First*, As to *abstruse* Points, I freely own, that my *daily Use* of the Scriptures, and my *steady Attention* to them, has greatly abated my Regard to what is not *there* clearly revealed, or *from thence* manifestly deduced; since *many Opinions* fiercely contended for on *one Side*, and opposed with the greatest Earnestness and Zeal on the *other*, seem to *me* (after what has, I hope, been a careful, and impartial Examination) rather different in *Appearance*, than in *Substance*; and on the *Whole* to be, as I have already observed, of *very little* Signification, or Use, in our Way to Heaven. For *these* Reasons I have studiously *avoided* whatever might lead to any of those *Peculiarities*, which have so unhappily *divided* Christians of different Denominations. The Church of Christ would more illustriously display the *Spirit*, and conform to the *Rules* of its blessed Founder, were *these* less studied, or regarded.—I have *too often* seen the Understanding so darkened by Prejudice in Favour of *precarious* Systems, that the clearest, the most important, and invariable Truths of holy Writ, have been made to depend on such *particular*, and *doubtful* Interpretations, as might best conduce to the Support of *those Notions*.—A melancholy *Proof*, that the Champions of Controversy labour not so much to form *their Plan* from Scripture, as to wrest *Scripture* for the Support of their Plan.

Our divine Master himself has given us an infallible Rule for the Direction of our Judgment, in declaring, that “*the Tree is known by its Fruits*;” and He has taught us by his Apostle, that “*Faith worketh by Love*.”—A due *Attention to this* might certainly prevent a great Number of presumptuous *Inquiries*, and unnecessary if not unmeaning *Distinctions*. *Faith* may (alas! it will) afford Matter of Controversy: *Hope* will be differently founded; but *Charity* (declared the greatest, and most important of the *three*) can admit of no Debate, or Doubt; yet whilst we enter into curious Researches *after*, and endless Disputes *about*, the *two former*, how often do we disregard, and entirely lose Sight of *the latter*! Thus perplexing our Minds, and souring our Tempers

“*with*

“with vain *Janglings*,” to the manifest Detriment of that *vital Holiness*, on which our *Peace* depends; of that *Holiness*, I say, which it is the *grand End* of the Gospel to promote; and which is the *only Proof*, that we actually are what we would be thought.

*Ye different Sects, who all declare,
Lo! here is Christ, or Christ is there!
If real Proofs ye mean to give,
Shew me as Christians how ye live.*

2. Secondly, as to the *favourable Thoughts*, which I sincerely entertain, and openly profess towards *those*, whose *Opinions* are *different* from each *other*, or from my *own*, either relating to *Ceremonies*, or *other Matters* not *expressly commanded*, or *clearly revealed* in Scripture (by which I more particularly mean *those*, who in *England conform* to our ecclesiastical Establishment, and those who *dissent* from it) I will only, in a few Words, say, that as such a *candid Disposition* in this State of *Imperfection*, appears to me a necessary, and *distinguishing* Characteristic of Christianity, I hope, I shall *always* retain, and study to *cultivate* it.

I am known to be a Member of the Church of *England*, and think I have sufficient *Reasons* for my *Adherence* to it.—I look not for *Perfection* in any Thing of mere *human* Institution: I am not taught by *Her* to expect it in her *own* Institutions, or Decisions.—No!—Permit me to mention it to her Honour, that in her Articles “*She acknowledges the holy Scriptures to be the only Rule of Faith;—does not arrogate to herself Infallibility;—nor pronounce as hopeless, reprobate, and damned, those who are not within her Pale.*” On these Principles is founded my *invariable* Attachment to the established Church; which whilst I profess in this *public Manner*, I scruple not at the same Time to declare, that in Goodwill, Love, and Charity, I account myself, and desire to be accounted the *Fellow-Member, and Brother* of every *real Christian*; by which I would be understood to mean the candidly religious, and truly good of *all Denominations*. Let us not forget the Reprimand given by
St.

St. Paul to the Censurer, in these divine Words, "*For who art thou that judgest another Man's Servant? One Man esteemeth one Day above another:—Another esteemeth every Day alike.—Let every Man be fully persuaded in his own Mind. He, that regardeth not the Day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. And we shall all stand before the Judgment-Seat of Christ.*" Rom. xiv. 4.

But are we obliged to comply with *all* Tempers, or Peculiarities contrary to Order, and to our own maturest Judgment? I answer—*By no means.*—I highly honour Piety and Virtue; and I most sincerely pity Enthusiasm, Error, and Prejudice, wheresoever they appear: Yet, when I apprehend that *THESE* concur, as they too often do, in the *same* Persons, I would no more conform to their Ideas of Public Worship, or be *incorporated* with them, than I would make them the Subject of Scoffs and Ridicule: And whilst what I look upon as an *Error in Judgment*, is the Object of my *Compassion*, not of my *Resentment*, it shall, by the Grace of God, be my constant Endeavour, as it is clearly my *Duty*, "*if it be possible, and as much as lieth in me, to live peaceably with all Men.*" Rom. xii. 18.

A List of some religious, and instructive Books, for the Information of those, who have not yet seen, or used them; but particularly recommended to such, as are charitably dispos'd, to be given to the Poor, especially in the Times of Sickness; or other Affliction.

AS it is no unusual, and a very valuable *Act of Beneficence* to present religious Books (the Choice of which is really an important Concern) to the *Infirmaries*, for the farther Edification of the *Patients*, and likewise to *others*, who are poor and uninstructed, I have here subjoined a *List* of such as appear to me greatly conducive to so charitable a Design.—Yet I must declare, that I would by no Means be thought to *dictate* to any whose Education may enable them to make a proper Choice for *themselves*, nor will to exclude *other* Books equally pious and edifying.—Let it only be considered, that *many* well qualified both to read and judge,

judge, and many, who have the *best Dispositions* to propagate, and improve religious Principles, may probably be *Strangers* to some of the valuable Treatises here recommended.—I would farther intreat from the Candour of my Reader, that he would not think me under an Obligation to defend *every* Peculiarity, Sentiment, or Expression of an Author, whose Treatise I approve *in general*, and therefore recommend.—It is the truly Christian Spirit, the pious Design, and the manifest *Usefulness* of the Work, to which I have constantly attended, and not any *particular* Opinion, or Tenet of the Writer.

Bishop *Gastrell's* Christian Institutes (in 12mo, eleventh Edition, Price 3s.)

We have in this excellent Book the whole Duty of a Christian taught in the very Words of Scripture, and such Texts, as suit every Condition, and Circumstance in Life, placed in Order under their several Heads.

Burkitt's Help and Guide to Christian Families (in 12mo, twenty-eighth Edition, Price 1s.)

Dr. *Worthington* on Resignation (fifth Edition, Price 2s. 6d.)

Dean *Stanhope's* Meditations for sick Persons (in 12mo. Price 4d.)

Dr. *Woodward's* fair Warnings to a careless World (in 12mo, fourth Edition, Price 2s.)

Mason on Self-Knowledge (in 12mo, eighth Edition, Price 2s.)

This Treatise is very useful, and very much approved. It shews the Nature and Benefit of that important Science, and the Way to attain it; intermix'd with various Reflections and Observations on human Nature.—I must here intreat my Reader's Indulgence to excuse one more Remark, *viz.* That amongst the many Exhortations given by wise Men of all Ages to pursue this necessary Knowledge, scarce any are more happily expressed, than that by a Writer of our own Country, *viz.* the Reverend Mr. *Browne*, in his *Sunday Thoughts*.

“ Be oft in Self-Inspection; KNOW THYSELF,

“ (Next thy blest Maker, next thy Saviour known)

“ Best, happiest Science Man can reach to know.”

BROWNE.

Jenks's Devotions (in 12mo, twenty-second Edition, Pr. 3s. 6d.)

This is a valuable Book, in which are *Consolations* suited to every Distress; *Petitions* accommodated to every Exigence; proper *Preservatives* suggested in Case of Temptation; and indeed, ample *Provision* made for all the spiritual Wants of a Christian.—So that it may not only be very useful at the *stated* Season of Devotion, but be *profitably* perused at any Interval of Leisure. It is indeed truly admirable for its Spirituality, and peculiarly striking, as it flowed from his very Heart; though his Style is not very polite,

as he purposely adapted it to the Capacities of the lower Sort.—The Reader will find excellent Materials in his Prayers, but they are not sufficiently reduced into Order and Method.—Had these been more regarded, this useful Book had been of still greater Use. I am sorry to say, that, in most Books of Devotion, the same Defect may be observed; but it has been carefully guarded against by the late Bishop of London (Dr. Gibson) in his Exhortation to Family Religion, on which Account that little Tract merits a particular Recommendation.

N. B. *The Design of recommending these Books, was principally that those who give them away, might chuse, and the Patients of Infirmarys or other poor Families might borrow, such as they judge most proper; and it is hoped not one will be found void of Instruction and Use.—At the same Time it may be determined, from the Size, and Price, which of them are proper to be distributed to every Patient, or every one in a poor Family, and which must serve for the Use of greater Numbers: As for instance, four, or more Books of a Sort in every Ward of an Infirmary, or one to a whole Family; though undoubtedly where it can be afforded, the Donation, to each Person to keep, as his own Property, would be more lastingly useful.*

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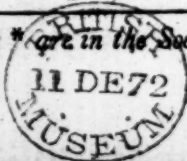
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